

hts group concerned about Syria detain

12:50	Sanas (TY)	Pepper (nos)
13:45	Vienna (CA)	Pepper (sweet)
13:45	Dubai (EM)	Potato
14:25	Damascus, Paris (AF)	Tomato
14:25	Amsterdam (KL)	String beans
15:15	Cairo (MS)	Watermelon
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Government, committee differ over contradicting articles in sales tax law

By Natasha Bukhari
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The chairman of the Lower House of Parliament Financial Committee, Ali Abul Ragheb, is disappointed with what he calls the government's "unreasonable" opposition to the recommendations made by his committee to amend the draft sales tax law.

The government wants the draft legislation to be passed according to its own terms, and lawmakers would not accept this, Mr. Abul Ragheb said.

The law, which created a great deal of debate last year, is the main item on the agenda of the House's two-month extraordinary session that started April 17.

In the House's first session, Islamic Action Front (IAF) deputies urged the House to reject the draft law saying that it was imposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and that it (the draft law) increases the tax burden on low income people.

In two sessions the House passed six articles of the draft law. Article 5, as passed following the recommendations of the Financial Committee stipulates that the taxed goods and services should be specified in lists attached to the law itself.

However, deputies approved another article that gave the government the right to specify the goods to be exempted from taxation, contrary to the Financial Committee's recommendation that the list be made part of the law itself rather than a flexible set of regulations.

According to Mr. Abul Ragheb, adding a clause to Article 6 gave the government "free hand to monopolise" the list of items exempted from the tax.

Mr. Abul Ragheb told the Jordan Times that the government had presented the House with a "mutilated" draft law that has "double-stating" clauses.

He urged the government not to amend the Financial Committee's recommendations because by doing so, "legal irregularities would follow as with Article 6 and 4." He said that deputies will have to review their votes on

the controversial articles when they vote on the law as a whole and expressed confidence that the lawmakers would vote in favour of the committee's recommendations.

Minister of Finance Sami Gammoh, however, told the Jordan Times Friday that deputies have to go back to Article 4 and amend it in order for Article 6 to be legally effective. Mr. Gammoh said that lawmakers should trust the government to make the "right" decision in regard to the list of items that are subject to taxation and those excluded from it. He added that flexibility in taxation regulations ensures rapid adjustments when required to serve the country's economic and national interests.

"Specifying the exempted items and tying the list down to a law does not allow for any amendments that may be necessary in the future," the minister said.

Deputy Abdul Karim Kabariti, who is also in the House Financial Committee, told the Jordan Times that pragmatism rather than ideological inflexibility is needed in dealing with this issue. "We have to judge matters by their end results and not by the means used to achieve those results," said Mr. Kabariti.

Mr. Kabariti described the House's debate on the draft legislation as a series of attacks and counterattacks, despite what he saw as the House's Financial Committee's efforts to base its recommendations on an all-encompassing study in which many parliamentary, governmental and political parties have been involved.

Mr. Kabariti, however, said that he expected the government to get its own way at the end of this dispute even if that was through the Upper House of Parliament, which, according to the constitution, can send back any draft law approved by the Lower House of Parliament if it is not satisfied with it.

Deputy Abul Ragheb, on the other hand, said that the government cannot afford to waste time as the draft law has been given the status of an emergency requirement by the IMF.



OFFICIAL DEPARTS — Mali President Alpha Conary Thursday concluded a three-day visit to Jordan during which he attended the funeral of the late Queen Mother and met with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to discuss Mali-Jordanian relations and economic cooperation. The president was also guest of honour at the opening of a five-day conference organised by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) where he delivered a brief address. During his stay in the Kingdom, the Mali president toured archaeological sites in Jerash, Ajloun and Amman in the company of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal Al Hassan. Upon his departure, the Mali president was seen off by Crown Prince Hassan, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Al Majali, Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Taher Al Masri, Cabinet members and high ranking officials.

Royal family accepts condolences

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Their Royal Highnesses the Princesses and Sherifs and the Royal Family members Friday accepted condolences from representatives of all walks of life who called at Raghadan Palace to offer their condolences over the death of the Queen Mother Zein Al Sharaf.

Condolences were accepted from tribal chiefs, representatives of voluntary societies, social and youth councils, mayors, heads of village councils, provincial governors, banks and companies' managers.

Condolences were also conveyed by Palestinian delegations from the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, representing all sectors of life.

Crown Prince Hassan also accepted condolences from director general and secretary general of the International Museums Conference.

At Basman Palace, Her Majesty Queen Noor, Their Royal Highnesses Princess Basma, Princess Taghrid, Princess Sarvath and Their Royal Highnesses the Princesses and Sherifs accepted condolences from director of Noor Al Hussein Foundation, representatives of Girls Scouts and Girl Guides at the Ministry of Education Schools and women delegations from various parts of Jordan.

They also accepted condolences from Sheikh Naifa Bint Khalifa, head of the Bahraini delegation to the "museums, civilisation and development" conference, currently held in Amman.

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Workshop discusses stemming pollution, desertification

RAMTHA (J.T.) — Topics which include air and water pollution and means to stem desertification and handle issues related to industrial pollution are on the agenda of a four-day workshop currently held at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) in conjunction with the American University of Beirut (AUB).

Addressing the opening session Thursday, Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Ahmad Aqileh said that the rising danger of pollution from various sources has prompted Jordan to take drastic measures

to protect the environment and ensure sustainable development.

Recent years have brought with them serious dangers to the environment, which is being threatened by pollution, posed in the form of desertification, encroachment of construction operations on agricultural land, excessive use of fertilisers and pesticides, the ever increasing population growth, threats to surface and underground water resources and solid and liquid waste, among other dangers, said the minister in his address to delegates representing six Arab countries gathered at JUST.

Tarawneh represents Jordan at Nixon's funeral

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Prince Talal Bin Mohammad was not able to attend the funeral of former U.S. President Richard Nixon on behalf of His Majesty King Hussein bin Talal, due to the sad news of the death of Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf.

Representing Jordan at the funeral which took place in Yorba Linda, California, on April 27 was Jordan's ambassador to the U.S. Faysel Tarawneh.

World traffic week starts Monday Road accidents claim 90 lives in three months this year

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 6,842 road accidents occurred in Jordan in the first three months of this year, causing the death of 90 people and the injury of 2,844 others, the Traffic Department announced Friday.

The department director, Brigadier Ahmad Dmour who made the announcement, said that most of the accidents were caused by people not abiding by traffic rules and speeding.

Speaking on the eve of Jordan's observance of the World Traffic Week, which starts Monday, Brig. Dmour said that a total of 24,799 road accidents occurred during 1993, resulting in the death of 440 people and the injury of 11,754 others. He added that 57 per cent of the accidents occurred in the Amman region.

Out of these numbers 16,555 resulted from vehicles colliding

and 1,497 involved cars hitting pedestrians, noted Brig. Dmour.

Brig. Dmour also noted that 61.2 per cent of the road victims last year and this year were children aged less than 15.

According to Brig. Khaled Aref, director of the Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Department, in the coming week his department would focus attention spreading awareness among the public concerning accidents in which people are hit by cars.

He said that in the past years such accidents accounted for nearly 20 per cent of the total number of accidents.

Brig. Aref said that the accidents are caused not only by speeding cars and motorists failing to abide by the rules but also by pedestrians who fail to cross the streets at the crossing

zones and the parents who fail to teach their children the traffic rules.

Brig. Aref said that the Interior Ministry, in cooperation with the concerned social sectors and the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents has worked out programmes and seminars in the course of a week-long campaign to spread awareness among the public in matters related to traffic rules.

According to Dr. Rawhi Sharif who represents the Jordanian Society for the Prevention of Road Accidents at the national committee for the traffic week, the road accidents have been on the increase lately and the observance of the week was necessary to draw public attention to the need to end the carnage and save lives and public property by abiding traffic rules on the roads.

Ten political parties call for end to Jordan-bound cargo inspection

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Ten Jordanian Islamist and leftist parties have joined hands to demand a total end to all inspections of Jordan-bound cargo as part of the enforcement of sanctions against Iraq and called on Arab, Islamic, non-aligned and African countries to support the Kingdom's stand.

In a rare joint statement, the 10 parties, including the powerful Islamic Action Front (IAF) and mostly leftist parties, did not directly refer to the agreement Jordan has reached with the U.S. to replace the sea-based inspections by a U.S.-led naval task force with a land-based sanctions verification regime.

But it rejected "any inspections in Jordanian territory, whether at sea or on land," as "an infringement of Jordan's sovereignty."

Official party spokesmen were not immediately available for comment, but party sources said the statement was deliberately left vague since the 10 groups, which espouse varying ideologies ranging from Islamic law, socialism, Baathism and pan-Arab nationalism, could not agree on a unified stand to reject the land-based verifications before the modalities of the arrangement were known.

The sources said some of the parties would not outrightly reject the land-based arrangement as long as it is conducted under the direct supervision of the United Nations with no American intervention while others did not want any inspections in any form of shape, they said.

"Some of the parties are aware that for the moment there is no escape from some kind of mechanism at Aqaba and they wanted to reflect that position in the statement," said one source. "But there is unanimous agreement that the inspections are unacceptable to Jordan and should be rejected as a form of pressure aimed at the Kingdom and its people."

After a meeting with His Majesty King Hussein in London on Monday, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Washington would support, subject to some "fine tuning," the Jordanian proposal that Lloyds Register of London conduct the sanctions-verifications at the port of Aqaba.

Lloyds Register of London is described as a non-profit, independent international organisation with no political affiliations. The American acceptance of the proposal came after more than three years of Jordanian complaints that the sanctions were not only causing heavy economic losses to the kingdom but also reflected distrust of the Kingdom despite its record of adherence to U.N. Security Council resolutions.

The U.S. agreed to the proposal to change the sanctions regime nearly one month after Jordan made its return to peace talks with Israel contingent on an end to inspections.

The two-page statement of the 10 parties, issued Thursday, said the continued inspections were a "punishment for the stand that Jordan and its people adopted during the Gulf crisis" by calling for an Arab solution to the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and refusing foreign intervention on Arab soil.

The inspections "constitute an aggression against the Jordanian people, who have paid a heavy price for the Gulf crisis in the form of poverty, high unemployment and social and economic problems," it said, adding that "Zionist domination" of the region through pressuring Jordan into signing peace agreements with Israel was the objective of the continued blockade of Aqaba.

The statement, a copy of which was made available to the Jordan Times, called on members of the Arab League, the Organisation of Islamic Conference, the Non-Aligned Movement and African countries to "make their voice heard" in support of the Jordanian rejection of the inspections which the parties described as piracy.

It also warned the United Nations, the Security Council, the United States and its allies which are party to the Red Sea inspections that the continued siege of Aqaba would only "deepen people's hostility."

The 10 parties which signed the statement control 20 seats, including the 16 of the Islamic Action Front, in the 80-member Lower House of Parliament.

The signatories to the statement were: The Islamic Action Front, the Jordanian People's Democratic Party, the Jordanian Socialist Democratic Party, the Jordanian Arab Socialist Party, the Jordan Arab Democratic Party, the Jordanian Popular Unity Party, the Jordanian Progressive Democratic Party, the Unionist Arab Democratic Party, the Jordanian People's Democratic Party and Al Mustakbal.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Iraq condoles King

AMMAN (Petra) — Iraqi president's special envoy Khalid Abdul Munim Rashid Al Janabi Friday left Amman at the end of a three-day visit during which he conveyed to His Majesty King Hussein condolences from the Iraqi president and people over the death of Queen Mother Zein Al Sharaf last week. Mr. Janabi, who is President Saddam Hussein's advisor, was received by King Hussein Thursday. The audience was attended by the Iraqi ambassador to Jordan.

Labour Day celebrations cancelled

AMMAN (Petra) — Labour Minister Khaled Al Ghazawi Friday said the Labour celebrations scheduled Sunday at Hussein Youth City are now cancelled in mourning over the death of Queen Mother Zein Al Sharaf. Mr. Ghazawi said the funds allocated for this celebration will be donated to Umm Al Hussein orphanage in true commitment to the noble message the late Queen Mother upheld. In a related development, Secretary General of the General Federation of Jordanian Trade Unions Khalid Shreim requested all trade unions and trade union committees to cancel any celebrations for the Labour Day.

WHAT'S GOING ON

- ★ Lecture in Arabic entitled "Horizons of Economic Jordanian-Palestinian Relations" by Dr. Taher Kam'an at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation in Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ Lecture in German (with translation into Arabic) entitled "Die Vetterin Juha's in Deutschland Und In Der Türkei" by Dr. Dieter Glade at Goethe-Institut at 6:00 p.m.
- ★ A one-day exhibition by artist Zaidan Ni'meh entitled "A Drawing of The Poems by Poet Abdul Wahab Bayati" at the Phoenix Gallery for Art and Culture (Tel. 695291).
- ★ Exhibition by artists Dr. Ali Ghoul, Hussein Dar'esh, Adnan Al Sharif, Abdul Hussein Tawaji, Salmaan Abbas, and Hafez Al Droubi at Orfali Art Gallery (Tel. 826932).
- ★ Exhibition of women's home-made products (including ceramics, sweets and handicrafts) at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition by paintings by artist Bahijah Al Hakim at AEA Art Gallery (Tel. 639303).
- ★ Exhibition by Jordanian and Iraqi artists at the Italian Language Centre (9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 669348).

The Indian Community living in Jordan

offers heartfelt condolences to
His Majesty King Hussein,
His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad,
His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan,
and Her Royal Highness Princess Basma
and other members of the Royal Family.
Over the passing of
Her Majesty Queen Zein Al Sharaf,
the Queen Mother
May her soul rest in peace

Agricultural roads targeted for 1995

AMMAN (Petra) — The slogan for 1995 of the Ministry of Public Works and Housing will be "Improvement of agricultural roads in Jordan" and allocations will be made to carry out the project, according to Minister of Public Works Abdul Razzak Ensour.

The Ministry of Public Works is in the process of contacting governors of various districts with the purpose of identifying the needs for agricultural roads to be built or the repair on the existing ones to be carried out, said Dr. Ensour at a meeting attended by directors of planning committees.

Once the information about these needs has been collected, work will start on preparations for the implementation of the projects, Dr. Ensour added.

Stressing that agricultural roads are the main pillars of the national economy, Dr. Ensour said that the ministry will make arrangements for including sufficient funds in the coming year's budget through the help of the ministries of finance and planning for the sake of implementing this vital projects.

Special attention, said the minister, will be given to roads linking the Jordan Valley region with the urban regions to help facilitate the transportation of agricultural produce. In the course of implementing the project, the minister added, the Ministry of Public Works will cooperate with the Royal Engineering Corps of the Jordanian Armed Forces to carry out repair on machines and heavy road equipment currently being used by the ministry in opening the Zaza-Ghor Haditha road in the southern Jordan valley region.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Photo Competition

Organised by

The Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature

On the occasion of Arbor Day, the Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature announces a photo competition, to feature nature in Jordan: Flowers, birds, trees or landscapes.

Conditions:

1. Each participant should provide between five and 10 slide-photos, printed, along with the negatives.
2. The size of the photo should not be smaller than 18 x 12 cm.
3. Photos are either in colour or black and white.
4. Last date for participation is 20/5/1994.
5. Results, prizes and certificates of the winners will be announced at a reception, and an exhibition will be held on the occasion of the World Environment Day, Sunday, 5/6/1994.
6. The prizes:

Flight ticket from Royal Jordanian
Flight ticket from Middle East Airlines
Camera (Yashica MF-2) presented by its agent Yacoub Berberian and Son Co.
Four metal Electra frames of excellent quality, 25x30 cm, presented by its Agent Yacoub Berberian and Son Co.
Citizen-watch presented by Michael Jewellery/Salt.

PS: Studio Haig, Agent of Mitsubishi Films, will also take part in this competition.

Board of Directors, Staff and Children of The American Community School

offer their heart felt condolences to
His Majesty King Hussein,
the Royal Hashemite Family and the
people of Jordan for the loss of
Her Majesty the Queen Mother
Zein Al Sharaf

Le Mirage ...



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Jordan Times

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S. Africa's new life

A NEW era has dawned on South Africa, the scene of decades long tension and turmoil between the black majority and the white minority, who ruled the country with an iron fist. With African National Congress (ANC) leader Nelson Mandela becoming, as forecast, the new president of the country as a result of the four-day long elections in which a very high percentage of the eligible voters took part, it is the beginning of a national rebirth in which the right to self-determination for all the people of South Africa, irrespective of their colour or race, was exercised.

"We have now moved from an era of pessimism, turmoil and conflict into a new era of hope, reconciliation and nation-building," Mandela was quoted as saying on the occasion of the belated transformation of his country from slavery into freedom and liberty. It is noteworthy that his new vision for the future is one for reconciliation between the whites and blacks rather than one of confrontation between them.

There is an obvious message in the newly emerging political story of South Africa. It is clearly one that strengthens the conviction in peoples' right to determine their political, economic and social future and vindicates all others who are still yearning for national salvation. It is also proof of the bankruptcy of making distinctions between people on the basis of colour, race or political opinion. The national liberation war that was successfully waged by the blacks of South Africa is one that deserves to be celebrated and commemorated by all the Third World, especially by peoples who are still struggling for freedom.

Still the political democratisation of South Africa is only the beginning of the new experience in the nation-building. Much more needs to be done as what lies ahead is even harder to accomplish. The new black-led government will inherit a national legacy of huge national debt and backlogs in housing, education and health care. Without the cooperation of the whites and the dismantling of the neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), the road ahead would be strewn with booby-traps. At least Zulu Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi should lend his support to the new African leadership by putting aside his provincial concerns in favour of the overall national interests of all South Africans. The new South Africa needs all the support it could muster not only from all South Africans, be they white or Zulus, or otherwise, but also the whole world community who has a vested interest in getting rid of apartheid once and for all.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour called on Arab countries to develop their relations with China at all levels and prevent Israel from damaging such relations in any form and under any circumstances. Taher Adwan said that the Arabs have big chances for opening their markets and their trade exchanges with China and have the opportunity to learn from this Asian giant how to develop at the social, political and economic levels. Since the middle of the 20th century, the Arabs and the Chinese have maintained very strong ties, and Beijing has always supported the Arab Nation's just causes, said the writer. We have to remember that when Israel had diplomatic ties with Islamic countries like Iran under the Shah, Beijing refused to recognise the Jewish state and supported the Arab rights. It is regrettable to see the Arabs failing to utilise such situation and to bolster trade, industrial and economic ties with China which is rising as a superpower at present, said the writer. While all indications point to the fact that China is fast becoming a super economic power, the Arabs are still dragging their feet in matters related to bolstering their ties with Beijing, added the writer.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour expressed regret that Arab states are trying to end their conflict with Israel only to open the door wide for a conflict among themselves. Mohammad Kawash said the hostile powers are now trying to stir trouble for Arab countries to keep them at odds with one another and so help Israel to dominate their affairs. With weak mini-Arab states, Israel is guaranteed the upper hand in this region, and with the religious, ethnic and social conflicts rising within the Arab countries there can be no danger for the Jewish state, he said. The writer said that Israel and its allies are currently striving to prevent the Arabs from adopting a common stand with which they can abort Israel's objectives, and are desperately stirring internal conflicts to achieve these goals. Even those countries surrounding Israel have failed to adopt a coordinated position with regard to the peace process, and there is little hope that they would adopt a joint stand, said the writer. He expressed fear that the internal strife within the Arab World could spill over the border and pit some Arab countries in armed conflicts against one another.

Jordanian Perspective

No quid pro quo for Aqaba

THE AMERICAN acceptance of Jordan's proposal that the sea-based inspections of Aqaba-bound cargo by a U.S.-led naval task force be replaced with a land-based regime has, in principle, removed a major hurdle in the Middle East peace process and offered a face-saving formula for both Jordan and the U.S.

The standoff, sparked after Jordan made it clear that its return to the peace talks hinged on an end to the damaging inspections by the enforcers of the international sanctions against Iraq, was long in the making. Our memories are fresh when James Baker, the secretary of state of the Bush administration, used to make promises after promises that the Kingdom's grievances would be looked into and addressed but with little happening on the ground.

Now that Warren Christopher, Mr. Baker's successor in a new administration, has announced in public after considerable foot-dragging that Washington would accept an Aqaba-based regime for verifying the sanctions, it is welcome news indeed.

But that does not mean we are roaring to get back to the peace negotiations with Israel. We would like to see what kind of modalities and mechanisms would accompany the arrangement. And that was precisely the reason behind His Majesty King Hussein's non-committal answers during the London press conference after meeting Mr. Christopher on Monday.

Our experience over the years has taught us that no one offers anything without strings attached and we are anxious to see that strings are attached to the Aqaba arrangement. For one thing, as Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali made clear a few hours before Mr. Christopher spoke on Monday, the Aqaba regime should not mean "inspections" because that would amount to an infringement on the sovereignty of the Kingdom.

Jordan has a record of total and complete respect for, and adherence to, the resolutions of the United Nations Security Council as a matter of principle. The "new world order,"

whose approach to Jordan is of a traditional carrot and stick, had better give us the credit that we deserve in this context and refrain from continued humiliation of Jordan as a country and Jordanians as a people.

Quite simply, Jordan should be trusted to adhere to the terms of the embargo on Iraq. To impose unacceptable conditions and terms for the presence of Lloyds Register, a neutral, international organisation of repute, at Aqaba and insist on "inspections" and "veto authority" would be counter-productive.

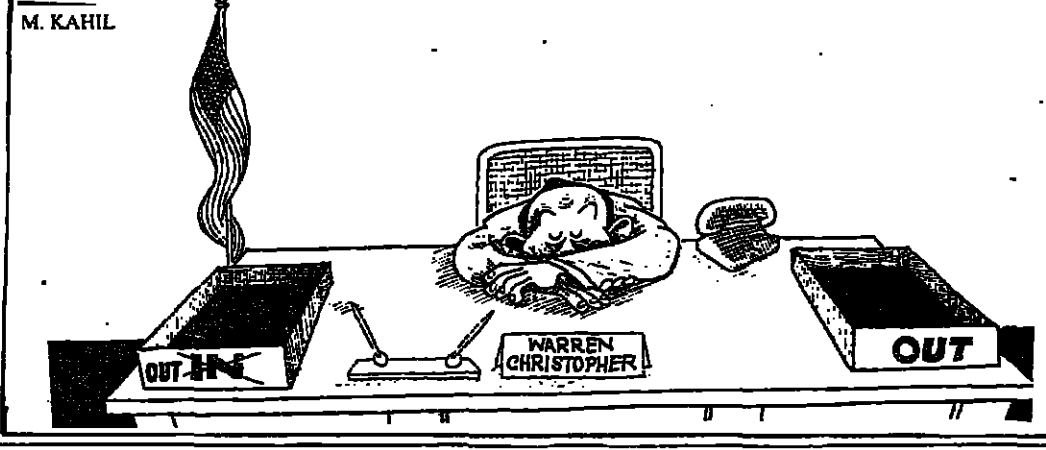
As Dr. Majali said Monday, Lloyds Register people are free to see the cargo unloaded at Aqaba when Jordan's customs department opens them for inspections, as warranted by the Kingdom's laws and regulations, and report to the U.N. Sanctions Committee of its "observations." We would not accept a situation when goods imported by a Jordanian for consumption in the local market or for use in local industries held back simply because the cargo is "suspect" and should receive the green signal from an external party before it could leave Aqaba port.

We hope that the repeated use of the word "inspections" by Mr. Christopher during his press conference in London on Monday was not a signal that Washington would insist on granting the Lloyds Register people the right to subject Jordanian imports to the whims of those waging an all-out campaign against Iraq and Jordan.

Hopefully, the days ahead will unfold the "technical modalities" and the "fine tuning" that the U.S. has been talking about in the context of the Aqaba verifications.

In the meantime, those anxious to see as little as possible in food and medicine to the Iraqi people should respect our government's finding that what they call front companies are legitimate Jordanian entities functioning within the confines of Jordanian laws and regulations. It is illogical to rule that the imports of those entities are subject to a blanket ban regardless of whether the cargo is exempt from the sanctions

By Dr. Musa Keilani



THE WEEK IN PRINT

U.S. should follow words with deeds and lift Aqaba siege

Reviewed By Elia Nasrallah

ARABIC DAILY newspapers in the past week gave prominence in their editorials to the passing away of the late Queen Zein Al Sharaf, the Queen Mother, but also discussed the Middle East question and a host of domestic issues.

Commenting on the scheduled visit to the Middle East by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, a columnist in Al Dustour said that the U.S. official's tour could be more significant than any of his earlier visits following Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's announcement that Israel could remove settlements in the Golan in exchange for peace with Syria. But the settlement issue is not the only problem impeding the process of peace between Israel and Syria, said Taher Al Adwan. What Syria demands is total peace along all the tracks on the one hand and recognition of the Palestinian people's rights in their homeland on the other, said the writer.

The Arabs, said the writer, want the United States to play a genuine role in the peace process in order to implement U.N. resolutions but today Washington has not taken any concrete step in this direction.

Walid Abu Bakr, another columnist in Al Dustour, said that the United States is bound to give momentum to the peace process because it wants to protect credibility. But it seems that the United States is not concerned whether the outcome of the negotiations would be just for both parties, said the writer.

Nothing that the Israelis are resorting to the carrot and the stick policy in its dealings with the Arabs ever since the start of the negotiations two years ago, the writer said that the Israeli leaders continually seek domination of the Arab region economically, militarily and politically.

Mohammad Kawash, another Al Dustour columnist, lauded a recent agreement between the Palestinian leadership and Hamas on the main policies for ending Israeli occupation of Palestinian land. Both Hamas and Patah are concerned with ending the occupation of Arab and it was natural for their leaders to conclude an agreement on cooperation to achieve that goal, said the writer.

Those casting doubt on Hamas' intentions are not helping the Palestinian cause, and one has to keep in mind that although Hamas is in the opposition camp with regard to means of achieving freedom for Palestinians its leaders have openly and clearly declared that resistance weapons can only be raised in the face of the Zionists, he added.

Al Ra'i daily commented on Mr. Christopher's announcement that the siege on Aqaba would end by paying tribute to His Majesty King Hussein's firm stand that helped bring about this favourable decision. The paper said that Washington's response to Jordan's demands was a result of the clear message by King Hussein that the Kingdom would not take part in further peace talks unless the siege has been lifted. Jordan, said the paper, is not violating the sanctions on Iraq and therefore has a strong point in this matter. It said that Washington has now removed the hurdle that impeded Jordan's participation in the peace process.

Commenting on Mr. Christopher's statements that Washington and Amman keep strong friendly relations, a columnist in Al Ra'i said that words are not enough.

Tareq Masarweh said Washington should prove by deeds rather than words its real friendship by ending the siege on Aqaba and respecting the national aspirations of the Arab people.

Jordan, said the writer, is part of the Arab World and feels closer to the other Arab countries than any foreign nation, and strives to protect Arab citizens and end injustices done to them. He said that neither the U.S. administration nor Mr. Christopher are really concerned about the real feelings of the Jordanian people and their national aspirations and therefore this can be by no means be friendly to the Kingdom.

Lawyer Hani Dahleh wrote an article in Al Dustour in which he stressed the significance of the professional unions in Jordan's politics.

Over the past four decades, the unions played a key role in Jordan's political arena and its members, who are doctors, engineers, pharmacists and lawyers, represent the cream of the intellectual sector of the country.

He criticised those voices which call for the unions to remain confined to their professional work and to leave the politics to the political parties.

A columnist in Al Dustour commented on a government ban on smoking inside government offices by saying that the order should have been coupled with a solution to the problem of smokers — who spend at least six hours in their offices.

Mohammad Daoud said that the way the ban was imposed by no means be implemented since the provision was made for creating places to the smokers to smoke. No doubt, he said, the smokers are bound to violate the rules. Voicing appreciation to the Health Ministry's drive to end the habit of smoking, the writer said unless smokers are allowed to smoke one way or another, their services to the public are bound to be adversely affected.

Salameh Ekour, a columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, said that the government seems to be convinced of the need to give raises to government employees but has no sufficient funds to do that.

The writer said that the government can indirectly help the limited-income groups, who are mostly government employees, by being firm against merchants who manipulate prices and the greedy traders who abide by no rules. He said that the government ought to impose stricter control on merchants who sell auto spare parts, electric appliances and food which all citizens need and ought to fix the rates of doctors and end the greed of hospitals in a manner that would help the ordinary citizen. If the government lacks sufficient funds for a raise to its employees said the writer, at least it can utilise its authority in order to reduce the burden on the Jordanian citizens.

Ahmad Dabbas, another columnist in Sawt Al Shaab, urged the government to introduce stricter measures designed to deter people from throwing waste from car windows. The writer said that appeals to the public to stop the bad habit have proved futile, and there was need for strict penalties to be imposed if we are to protect the environment and keep the streets and public squares clean and safe.

IMF official casts a line to Algiers

By Francis Ghiles

Mr. Michel Camdessus, managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has taken a huge gamble. So has General Liamine Zeroul, the Algerian head of state. If they fail, neither the IMF nor the Algerian army will have another chance to save north Africa's largest country from a fate which a senior U.S. official likened to one of "creeping Afghanistan."

Mr. Camdessus has asked the board of the IMF to extend a \$1bn (£580m) one-year standby loan to Algeria, which the board is expected to approve by the end of the month. He has called on Algeria's foreign creditors to follow the IMF and provide the country with a further \$8bn-\$9bn which it will need to pay its international way this year.

Of this total, \$3.5bn would come from the rescheduling of the principal repayments of debt owed to its sovereign creditors, who are due to meet at a Paris Club meeting in mid-May; \$1.5bn would come from the World Bank, African Development Bank and Arab Monetary Fund loans; \$1bn from the European Union; and the balance from export credits which would be maintained at last year's level.

Algeria has already been asked to take its medicine. Three weeks ago the price of nine staple foodstuffs — including flour, bread and milk — were increased by between 25 and 100 per cent. This followed similar rises in the cost of petrol and domestic fuel. Other increases are intended to follow.

The dinar has been de-

valued by 40 per cent and interest rates raised. Measures to liberalise foreign trade are expected this week. A later stage in the process will require state companies to shed excess labour.

Mr. Redha Malek, the prime minister since last August, announced last week he was resigning. Foreign observers do not agree on why. It may be that he disagreed with the policy now openly pursued by Gen. Zeroul of trying to talk to those members of the banned fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) who do not wish to see their country slide into total anarchy.

It may be that the head of state wanted to replace him with a technocrat who carries no political weight and whose job is that of the surgeon, a man who can be disposed of easily if the going gets rough.

Mr. Mokdad Sifi, who is taking over, certainly fits that description. He comes from Tebessa, a town close to the Tunisian border which has provided many key figures to the Direction Generale de La Securite Nationale, the fount of much power in Algeria over 30 years.

Days before Mr. Malek's departure, Mr. Camdessus had expressed, in an interview with Algerian state television, much enthusiasm and hope about the process of economic reform upon which he felt Algeria was embarking.

Many Algerians hope the IMF chief's judgment is better vindicated by events than it was after the last agreement with the Fund. That accord, signed in June 1991, was followed promptly by the dismissal of the then reform-

mist prime minister, Mr. Mouloud Hamrouche. Mr. Camdessus heaped praise on his successor, Mr. Sid Ahmad Ghazali, whose policies went on in effect to destroy the economic reforms to which the IMF had just given its imprimatur.

The position today is incomparably worse. Some 4,000 Algerians have died since elections, which the FIS was poised to win, were suspended in January 1992. Fierce repression has not prevented large areas of Algeria, including some cities, from slipping out of the state's control, notably at night. The "hardline" Islamic Armed Group is committing acts of terror on ordinary Algerians and has targeted foreigners, many of whom have fled the country.

Although this has helped bring Algeria's economy to its current state of semi-collapse, a main factor has been the fall in world prices of hydrocarbons, which account for 90 per cent of the country's foreign income. Foreign debt repayments would, in the absence of an agreement with the country's western creditors, absorb virtually all Algeria's forecast \$9bn income this year.

As fate of a reform package now being put together, the country's foreign creditors are, in the words of one senior European banker, "functioning on a wing and a prayer."

So are 26m Algerians. As one sardonically commented: "The difference is that we are risking our lives while Western countries are only risking their money."

The Financial Times.

The darker side of the legacy: a nation of cynics

By Jill Lawrence
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A dark side of Richard M. Nixon's legacy endures today in a nation of cynics. The Watergate deeds that led to his forced resignation deepened and solidified the public mistrust bequeathed by his predecessor.

Lyndon B. Johnson's deceptive accounts of the Vietnam war opened a yawning credibility gap. Then came Mr. Nixon's White House, crossing the line into criminal conduct with the Watergate scandal.

Mr. Nixon was the only U.S. president to resign. He quit after a break-in at the Watergate Hotel in Washington unleashed a scandal over harassment of his political opponents, taped telephone conversations and obstructing investigators.

"Watergate was a watershed. It turned presidents into potential crooks," said sociologist Todd Gitlin, author of "The Sixties." Mr. Nixon's duplicity aggravated a "fundamental cultural malaise" marked by the conviction that whatever appears in public is a facade, said sociologist Jeffrey Goldfarb, author of "The Cynical Society."

"He was to his core a cynical person," said Mr. Goldfarb, a professor at the New School for Social Research. "He taught the nation to be very, very wary about the articulation of any ideal, because all ideals seemed to be absolutely vacuous."

A whole range of social and political consequences ensued from the three-syllable word that is now shorthand for all that is corrupt and corrosive in government. Not least of them is the permanent shadow of impeachment on the political landscape.

"Before Watergate, the notion of a presidential impeachment was from the dark ages, the 19th century. No one thought about it," said Michael Schudson.

Mr. Schudson, a sociology professor at the University of California at San Diego, said political leaders didn't mention impeachment for almost a year into the Watergate affair. But it came up within days of the first revelations in the Reagan administration's Iran-Contra scandal.

"That's ridiculous, but that is a legacy of Watergate," Mr. Schudson said. "We are ready to suspect that any little thread we find is going to lead to a whole roomful of horrors."

Other parts of the legacy include an aggressive press corps inspired by the investigative work that unraveled Watergate, and a strengthened freedom of information act opening government business to public scrutiny.

In addition, the U.S. Congress passed a law to create the special prosecutors who investigate potential government scandals.

Americans have demonstrated at the polls that they yearn for a president they can trust. They elected Jimmy Carter in 1976 at least partly on the strength of his promise that he would never lie to them. But he proved to be a weak leader.

The country next turned to Ronald Reagan, whose forceful optimism did give the White House a temporary boost. The Harris level of confidence was up to 42 per cent in 1984 but fell to 17 per cent in 1988, after the Iran-Contra disclosures. And that's about where Bill Clinton finds the presidency today.

S. African polls judged fair

(Continued from page 1)
rural areas stymied by a lack of ballot papers and other election problems had the extra polling day.

While the rest of the country finished its three-day election Thursday, people in areas encompassing the former black homelands of Transkei, Ciskei, KwaZulu, Venda, Lebowa and Gazankulu were given a fourth day.

Judge Krieger briefed Mr. Mandela and President F.W. de Klerk on latest developments Friday afternoon, saying the extension had served its purpose.

Would he declare the election free and fair, reporters asked.
"So far, there is no reason to say it isn't," Mr. Krieger replied.

Military helicopters reached remote villages in KwaZulu, where some polling stations have never opened. At Nongoma, the home of Zulu King Goodwill Zwelithini, trucks were sent deep into the mountains to collect voters.

"This is a vast area. People are poor and they haven't been able to reach us," said election official Carl Holdt.

Tribal feuding was hindering ballot distribution in some parts, but elsewhere chiefs and community leaders were sending runners to guide the election officials, Holdt said.

"It's like the birth of a baby — problems, anxiety and joy," said a local magistrate, Linda Khaba.

At the Midwedwe poll in KwaZulu, the presiding officer, Bonjani Khumulo, said many teenagers under 18 were getting identification cards allowing them to vote. No one was willing to leave the region's political tensions to stop the abuse, he said.

In two violent black townships outside Johannesburg, where there was not supposed to be balloting Friday, polls were surrounded by people demanding to vote, according to election monitors. They said the election monitors felt their lives were in danger and opened the polls, but the ballots would be treated separately.

Where polls had closed, weary election workers prepared for counting, scheduled to begin at 6 a.m. (0400 GMT) Saturday. Final results were anticipated by Sunday.



(Left to right) Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at their joint press conference in Cairo on Thursday (AFP)

Israel, PLO sign economic agreement

(Continued from page 1)

foreign businessmen and Palestinians living abroad to invest.

As part of the overall plan to grant the Palestinians autonomy, the accord will limit some trade but allow the Palestinians to set taxes on imports and incomes.

The Palestinians will also regulate banks in the territories.

But the accord failed to include provisions to establish a Palestinian currency, a symbol of statehood rejected by the Israelis and insisted on by the Palestinians until late in the talks.

Mr. Shohat and Mr. Qourie signed the agreement in a baroque hall of the French foreign ministry.

"There are many events of sadness in the world, but luckily we have these moments of privileged importance," said France's foreign minister, Alain Juppe.

He expressed the hope that other agreements would soon be concluded setting out the framework for relations between Israelis and Palestinians following the September signing of the autonomy accord.

"The news from Cairo is encouraging," Mr. Juppe added. "This conflict has been costly, both in physical and material loss," said Mr. Shohat. "The time has come to invest our energies in the pursuit of peace and prosperity."

Mr. Shohat also noted that the agreement will "defend our economy from an influx of goods."

The Palestinian side did not swerve from the sober tone it has maintained throughout the talks. This is a "contractual agreement for a temporary period," said Mr. Qourie, "and it will be reviewed."

Lack of an economic accord would have complicated implementation of the main agreement, since international aid

totaling \$2.4 billion was being held up as donors waited for a spending plan.

Addressing his domestic audience over Israeli radio, Mr. Shohat said: "It's a good agreement which upholds Israel's economic interests and allows the Palestinians to develop their own economy."

Under the economic accord for the period of interim self-rule, the Palestinians are to have similar imports and customs policies as those of the Jewish state.

The Palestinians will be able to import goods from Arab countries in agreed, limited quantities, under the deal.

The PLO has foregone demands for an independent central bank but will set up its own monetary authority to control and monitor the banking and financial sectors.

The two sides failed to agree on a Palestinian currency, and the shekel will continue to be used in the territories.

On Palestinian money, the accord merely said the joint committee "will continue to discuss ... the possibility of introducing mutually agreed Palestinian currency or a temporary alternative currency arrangement."

"We say currencies are issued only by states," said Daniel Shek, a spokesman for the Israeli delegation. "There was no economic justification or logic in the current condition of the territories..."

Amin Haddad, deputy head of the Palestinian delegation, sighed when asked how soon he hoped for a currency.

"In the near future I think, no time frame," he told a reporter shortly before the signing. "It was one of the sticking points."

But he added: "I'm not saying we're going to set up a state tomorrow. I'm saying that the first steps towards

setting up a Palestinian state have been taken."

The money is desperately needed to begin rebuilding the devastated occupied territories and set up a Palestinian government.

After about 450 hours of talks over the past six months, the main final sticking point centered on customs, both sides said.

Overall agreement was announced late Thursday night, but meetings continued until 8 a.m. (0600 GMT) Friday, 90 minutes before the scheduled signing.

Last-minute disagreement surfaced Thursday on imports into the occupied territories, especially from Egypt and Jordan, an issue that was said Wednesday night to be settled, according to sources close to the talks speaking on condition of anonymity.

Israeli officials were concerned that cheap imports could flood through the territories and into Israel.

The final agreement ensured the free movement of goods except for five items on which quotas were imposed for five years: tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, eggs and poultry.

The agreement also covered tourism, labour, insurance and fuel sales. Gasoline in the territories is not to be sold more than 15 per cent less than in Israel.

A joint economic committee will coordinate implementation of the accord.

The economic accord is the second to be signed since September. A security agreement was signed in Cairo in February.

Self-rule set for signing on May 4

(Continued from page 1)

phone and postal service and registration of transients in Jericho and Gaza.

According to Israeli sources in Cairo, Israel agreed Thursday night that the Palestinians could have their own postage stamps and passports, all considered symbols of their aspiration for sovereignty.

However, the issues of Palestinians at border crossings and the size of Jericho remained to be dealt with by Mr. Rabin and Mr. Arafat Tuesday night in Cairo.

Also, the sources said, the PLO was demanding recognition of territorial waters reaching nine miles out from the Mediterranean shores of Gaza.

Mr. Peres said the period of Palestinian autonomy will be only three years not five, after which a permanent settlement will be applied in the occupied territories.

"We have decided to give the Palestinians a travel document, which is both a 'laissez-

passer' and a passport, for a period of three years after which the permanent status will begin," Mr. Peres told Israel Radio.

Under the Sept. 13 declaration of principles for autonomy, the interim period was to last five years.

"Permanent status negotiations will commence as soon as possible but not later than the beginning of the third year of the interim period," the declaration states.

"We have decided to start negotiations on the final status after the second year of autonomy and they will have to end one year later," Mr. Peres said, setting a timetable for the first time.

However, an embarrassed foreign ministry spokesman later called AFP to issue a clarification of Mr. Peres's remarks. "The timetable in the declaration of principles remains unchanged," the spokesman said. "The five years still stand."

But he did not deny the Peres statement and did not

explain the discrepancy.

Mr. Peres had explained the three years. "That is why we have decided that the Palestinians will have laissez-passers documents valid for three years."

"The document, which is both a laissez-passer and a passport is an elegant, original and intelligent solution which does not prejudice the creation of a Palestinian state as the final status," Mr. Peres said.

Mr. Peres and Mr. Rabin have in the past repeatedly underlined that they are opposed to a Palestinian state and wary to see a confederation between the Palestinians and Jordan.

Mr. Rabin said the Cairo accord to be signed would serve as a model for all the Israeli-occupied territories to be granted autonomy, not just Gaza and Jericho.

He also called on Arab leaders to attend next Wednesday's signing in the Egyptian capital "to show that the accord opens a new era in relations between Israel and the Arab World."

Jordan to ease restrictions on Palestinians

(Continued from page 1)

we decided to ease these rules."

Jordan's September measures included limiting family visits, the main category of travellers coming to Jordan, and introduced extra interrogations at the bridge to determine the reason of travel.

The changes were in response to Israeli measures to slash the price of exit permits to \$42 from \$170 and ease paper work, which increased numbers of Palestinians travelling into Jordan.

Another official, speaking to the AP on condition of anonymity, said the government was planning to allow Palestinians free entry and exit.

"For example, a woman who is married to a Jordanian will be granted a three-year residency permit instead of one month," he told the AP.

He also said the Jordanian decision was prompted by "imminent Palestinian self-rule, which hopefully will encourage Palestinians to stay in their homeland and hinder Israeli expulsion plans."

Since Jordan severed legal

and administrative ties with the West Bank in July 1988, it introduced measures aimed at curbing the number of Palestinians who were prompted by an ailing economy in their homeland to seek better living conditions here.

It mainly allowed in businessmen, students and sick people who sought treatment here or abroad as well as tourists and those who come for family reunions.

The Kingdom also changed passport procedures. It gave Palestinians who reside in the West Bank temporary two-year passports and revoked their citizenship rights in Jordan.

Friday's move coincided with Israel and the PLO wrapping up five months of peace talks, setting Wednesday as the target date for signing an agreement that will set in motion Israeli withdrawal from parts of the West Bank and Gaza and the start of Palestinian self-rule there.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan issued instructions last week for the concerned authorities to re-

examine regulations issued in 1988 following Jordan's severance of legal and administrative ties with the West Bank.

Mr. Hammad said the new procedures, which were adopted under directives by His Majesty King Hussein and Prince Hassan, will be active as of Sunday.

He said former procedures concerning the residence and the transit of West Bankers and Gazans were fully adhered to by the authorities out of the Kingdom's pan-Arab and nationalistic understanding of the plight of Palestinians in the occupied territories.

Based on this understanding, said Mr. Hammad, Jordan was keen to keep "the open bridges policies" with Palestinians in the occupied territories since the 1967 war.

"These policies, though criticised by some parties, have contributed to maintaining national contacts with the inhabitants of the occupied Arab lands and to enhancing their pan-Arab belonging," he said, adding that Jordan maintained this policy despite its economic, political and demographic consequences.



Election volunteers issue voter cards on Friday to many South Africans who could not vote and were granted an extra polling day. This photo was taken in Ndaweni in Natal/KwaZulu (AFP photo)

Christopher gets Israeli plan

(Continued from page 1)

way of peace with Syria. Israel has demanded that Syria specify whether it will agree to full peace with Israel that will include open borders and diplomatic exchanges.

"We've got a lot of hard work ahead of us," Mr. Christopher said of his trip to Damascus on Saturday. After returning to Israel on Sunday he will go to Cairo on Tuesday for the expected signing of an agreement Wednesday to give Palestinians self-rule in the West Bank town of Jericho and in the Gaza Strip.

Mr. Rabin and Mr. Christopher refused to provide any details of the package being delivered to Mr. Assad and Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Sharaa. Also without elaboration, Mr. Rabin told

reporters he had made "demands" of the United States. He apparently was referring to technology and other elements of an early-warning system. Clinton administration officials, eager to have Israel trade land for peace with all its Arab neighbours, already have indicated American troops could be stationed on the Golan Heights as part of an international peacekeeping force.

"Israel is interested in achieving peace with the three neighbouring Arab countries beyond the peace with Egypt," Mr. Rabin said after the second of two 90-minute meetings with Mr. Christopher.

"And we appreciate your effort in bringing the Syrian and Israeli positions closer," Mr. Rabin said.

Yemen crisis flares

(Continued from page 1)

the town of Amran, on a plain flanked by mountains north of Sanaa, was now quiet but tense.

No official figures for casualties have been released. Reports from Aden said, however, that the danger of further bloody clashes eased Friday after the southern brigade retreated to the mountains around Amran.

Military officials of the Aden-based Yemen Socialist Party (YSP) said the 1,200 troops pulled out after reinforcements of northern troops, including elite Republican Guards, arrived at Amran.

Yemeni journalists who visited the scene said the northern troops gained the upper hand in the fighting which began on Wednesday, and the southern forces sought refuge with an allied tribe, the Bakil.

YSP officials described the southern forces' retreat as a "brilliant tactical manoeuvre," which avoided unnecessary casualties.

President Ali Abdullah Saleh blamed South Yemeni "secessionists" for the fighting, and warned them to halt the provocations.

The official SABA news agency said Mr. Saleh, visiting northern troops wounded in the clashes, appealed to the southerners "to see reason and to adopt peaceful dialogue as a means of resolving differences."

A pro-YSP newspaper, October 14, said Friday northern troops based in the southern were reinforcing their posi-

tions. "The (northern) Al Amaliq Brigade is stocking up with weapons and ammunition in order to tighten its grip on Abyan province and a key point commanding eastern the gateway to Aden," the paper said.

Clashes erupted between the brigade and southern troops in Abyan on February 21, a day after a reconciliation accord was signed in Amman by Mr. Saleh and his southern rival, Vice-President Ali Salem Al Beidh.

The two leaders have been at odds since August, when Mr. Beidh refused to take up his duties in Sanaa, demanding major political and economic reforms and citing security fears.

Since unification in May 1990 each side has maintained a separate army of about 30,000 men each.

At a meeting with the president on April 3, the Beidh said his troops stationed in the north should withdraw to the south and that northern forces should leave the south.

But Mr. Saleh ruled out the proposal, charging it was a step towards partition.

In Sanaa, gunmen on Thursday wounded the country's first deputy prime minister, Hassan Mohammad Mekki, and killed three of his bodyguards, officials said.

Mekki a member of the ruling General People's Congress, had been attending a meeting to discuss the violence in Amran.

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Unemployment, illiteracy threaten stability in Arab states

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab states are still suffering from high unemployment and illiteracy rates despite economic reforms and educational campaigns, and the problem is threatening stability in the region, an official Arab report has said.

While illiteracy is expected to decline in the near future, unemployment is likely to get worse in some Arab countries due to economic slowdown and a rapid population growth, said the report by the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development and the Abu Dhabi-based Arab Monetary Fund.

"The high unemployment rate in several Arab countries

is one of the most serious problems which affect not only economic development but social and political stability," the 1993 annual report said.

"What increases the dangers of this phenomenon is that unemployment rates are steadily rising and the problem could become more complicated in future."

The report said unemployment in some Arab countries far exceeded that in industrial countries where such rates do not exceed 10 per cent.

In Jordan, it rose from six per cent in 1985 to 19 per cent in 1991 while it increased from 13 per cent to 16 per cent in Tunisia, it said. In Morocco it

stood at 16 per cent and Algeria at 19 per cent.

It said unemployment was widespread among educated people in Algeria, Egypt and Morocco. "This makes the problem more worrying," it added.

The report put the workforce in the Arab League's 22 members at 66 million, which it said would increase to 81 million by the year 2000.

It said the expected growth in labour was because more women were taking up jobs and a large number of people are within working age groups.

But the report cited what it called negative aspects in the labour structure in the Arab

World, including the low productivity of workers, small contribution by women to economic activity and employment of children.

"Productivity of a worker in Europe is more than six times the productivity in the Arab World," it said. "The problem is underscored in the farming sector, which accounts for 36 per cent of the Arab labour force but its share in the gross domestic product did not exceed 13 per cent in 1992."

Surveys conducted recently in some Arab nations showed around 1.3 million children aged between 6-14 were working in Egypt while children accounted for 13.3 per cent of

the total workforce in Morocco's countryside, it said.

"The surveys showed that this phenomenon is prevalent in the countryside of other Arab countries," it said.

"What adds to those problems is the large number of non-Arab expatriate workers in the Gulf oil producing states."

The report showed the services sector attracted the largest number of workers, accounting for 46 per cent.

It was followed by the farming sector, which has 36 per cent, and the industrial sector, with 18 per cent.

Women accounted for only 6.7 per cent of the total Arab workforce but the level was

expected to jump to 20 per cent in the year 2000.

"Illiteracy is another serious problem facing Arab states. Despite educational campaigns, illiteracy stood at 49 per cent in 1991 compared with 66 per cent in 1970. The level is expected to decline further to reach 38 per cent in the year 2000," the report said.

Women are suffering most, with their illiteracy accounting for nearly 62 per cent of the total. The level is expected to reach 50 per cent by the year 2000, it added.

A breakdown for 1992 showed Somalia had the highest rate, standing at 75.9 per cent, followed by Sudan at 72.9.

Survival worries dog Indian industry as it gears for competition

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Indian industry is pondering its post-GATT future amid fears over whether it can survive the cut-throat competition and fierce brand wars of a free market.

The introduction comes at a time when competition has become the corporate mantra in India, nearly three years after the government ushered in an era of liberalisation with tariff cuts and incentives for foreign investors.

"The Indian businessman is a vanishing species," Jay Dubashi, who heads the economic cell of the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party), has predicted in the latest dire forecast of Indian industry's future.

challenge... India will become an economically irrelevant nation" in the post-GATT world, Mr. Singh warned.

Competition, in the days before the dawn of liberalisation, meant which businessman got to see an industry ministry bureaucracy faster, said Onkar Goswami, a professor at the Indian Statistical Institute.

Now it means the challenge of imports, foreign direct investments and the clout of multinationals increasing their equity in Indian subsidiaries, lured by a huge market of up to 200 million middle-class consumers.

Foreign brand names — from Ray Ban sunglasses and Benetton fashion ware to Bosch washing machines — have appeared in Indian showrooms.

Kellogg breakfast cereals, Mars chocolate bars, Mobil and Shell motor lubricants, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Marlboro cigarettes and Levi's jeans are among the foreign giants waiting to storm India, also the latest arena for a Coca-Cola-Pepsi battle.

Multinational subsidiaries such as Hindustan Lever are at a blitzkrieg of new product launches and are relentlessly plugging their brands to force out local rivals.

In a case often cited by the merchants of doom, top soft drink maker Parle sold out to Coca-Cola Co. rather than pit its popular thums up against both Coke and Pepsi.

Such sectors as chemicals, petrochemicals, steel and engineering meanwhile are facing the pinch of cheaper imports, and high raw material and infrastructure costs and interest rates.

S.M. Datta, who heads the Indian operations of chemical giant Unilever, predicts that the corporate shake-out will leave plenty of casualties.

A third of the country's industrial enterprises will be forced to shut up shop and five of the top 10 major corporations will have to make way for others, he said.

Weekly analysis of movements and trends of major world currencies

This report is provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch-Dubai.

Overview

Fundamental View: The dollar has failed to rally in response to either the Fed's surprise 25-basis point hike on April 18 or to the Bundesbank's recent rate cuts. The dollar's lackluster performance may reflect a slowdown of portfolio capital flows to the U.S. in view of uncertain prospects for U.S. equity and bond markets.

The dollar should eventually rise further against the Deutsche mark as German interest rates decline by more than expected. Japan's new prime minister is expected to make little headway on trade liberalisation, suggesting that yen strength will continue as part of U.S. policy to boost exports and narrow Japan's huge current account surplus.

We maintain our 12-month targets of JPY/USD 95 and DM/USD 1.80.

Technical View: For the second week in a row, it was not a case of how many, but how much. Even though the U.S. dollar was able to post gains against five of the six major currencies that we most regularly monitor, the U.S. dollar index fell less than 0.1 per cent as the greenback fell sharply versus the Japanese yen. Put/call ratios for the dollar remain oversold, but are beginning to deteriorate. At the same time, short term rates of change have begun to weaken. Both of these points raise the prospects for renewed dollar weakness in coming days.

By contrast, medium term momentum is showing signs of bottoming, suggesting that the underlying February-April corrective pattern is coming to an end. Thus, any nearby weakness could well be the last leg to the correction. The inability, so far, to break 92.80 support further adds to the prospects for a bottom. While resistance at 95.50-95.90 is still important in the sense that a rally through that range would allow for a test of the February high (97.10), we are lowering first resistance to 94.40. A rally through that level would imply that a bottom is in place.

Japanese Yen

Fundamental View: The dollar remains little changed against the yen despite the Fed's surprise 25-point rate hike on April 18. The selection of Foreign Minister Hata as Japan's new prime minister is expected to have little impact on Japanese economic policy, especially since the ruling coalition is likely to remain split between conservatives and the Socialists. Mr. Hata's close ties to the bureaucracy suggest that there will be few bold new initiatives on trade liberalisation. Accordingly, market participants may continue to believe that the U.S. administration will favour yen appreciation as a way of cutting Japan's trade surplus. The yen is still within the 100-to-110 range that both Japan and the U.S. appear content to live with for the time being. Interest rate trends could favour the dollar as the Fed continues to tighten monetary policy, but trade frictions could well beat up ahead of a planned meeting between President Clinton and Mr. Hata at the G-7 summit in Naples this July.

Longer-term, persistent current account surpluses should keep upward pressure on the yen. Even if Japan agrees to some market access measures for U.S. companies, we still expect a current account surplus of nearly \$120 billion this year. That should help the yen to continue to trade in the JPY/USD 100-to-110 range for JPY/USD 95 by this time next year.

Technical View: The Japanese yen rallied 1.8 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended April 15, making it the strongest currency of the six we most regularly discuss. Sentiment remains neutral. Short term momentum has been weak, but is showing signs of improvement.

By contrast, medium term momentum is constructive, but appears to be close to peaking. Thus, any nearby strength will help to relieve some of the medium term pressures. While a test of resistance at 101 Y/U.S.\$ is still possible, the currency has been in a trading range since early February and the mounting downside pressures should be monitored closely. The area around 106.40 is viewed as first support, but it should be noted that it would require a decline through 110 to break a multi-year uptrend line.

Deutsche mark

Fundamental View: The dollar has failed to rally against the Deutsche mark in response to the Fed's surprise rate hike on April 18 or in response to recent easing moves by the Bundesbank. With foreign investors still wary of U.S. bond and equity markets, perceptions that Fed policy has stabilised may be required before capital inflows begin to lend more support to the dollar. By the same token, the Bundesbank's surprise 25-basis point cut in its Lombard rate on April 14 and its subsequent 12-basis point cut in its repo rate on April 20 may be encouraging capital inflows into Germany's more hospitable financial markets. Eventually, the rate advantage of dollar assets over German assets — which is already apparent at all but the shortest maturities — should lead to a stronger dollar. With German growth still stagnant and German inflation likely to fall to 2 per cent or under next year, Germany's need to maintain an overvalued currency will diminish.

We can therefore expect German short-term interest rates to fall by more than the markets expect, to perhaps 4 per cent by this time next year, while the Bundesbank tolerates a gradual weakening of the Deutsche mark against the dollar. We continue to look for the dollar to rise to the DM/USD 1.80 level in 6-months time and to continue to trade around that level in 12-months.

Technical View: The Deutsche mark fell 0.1 per cent against the U.S. dollar last week. Sentiment has recently been overbought, but may be set to improve. At the same time, short term momentum also seems ready to improve. Medium term momentum still has an upward bias. All of this implies that still higher highs are still possible in coming weeks, but the currency's rally trend is now mature.

With all of this in mind, a rally through 1.65-1.66 DM/U.S.\$ could still be enough to signal a challenge of last October's 1.59 high. Support is at 1.726-1.74; a decline through that range would imply a test of the currency's February lows at 1.765. Both short term and medium term momentum for the mark/yen cross-rate appears to be in a bottoming process. This, plus the existence of a potential multi-month base pattern, suggests that any further weakness in coming weeks could complete a longer term bottoming process and set the stage for an important rally.

In that regard, the area near 63.00 is still viewed as both chart and momentum resistance. With the cross having tested support at 60.90, a decisive break of that level would allow for a test of the February low at 59.40.

Pound sterling

Fundamental View: The British pound remained generally stable this week, trading near DM/GBP 2.52 and U.S./GBP 1.48. We expect the pound to rise to DM/GBP 2.65 in 12 months as short-term DM interest rates fall by 120 basis points compared to little change in sterling rates. The pound should also be supported by a substantial yield premium over German bonds. We expect no further reductions in the base interest rate because markets responded unfavourably to the last cut, which was believed to be politically motivated. Thus upcoming elections in May and June would preclude a cut at this time.

Recent data on producer and retail price inflation were more favourable than expected. Sufficient excess capacity is available to accommodate the moderate 2.7 per cent GDP growth we are expecting this year, suggesting little danger of accelerating inflation or the need for hikes in short-term interest rates. We expect the pound to trade at U.S./GBP 1.47 in 12 months as pound appreciation against the DM is roughly offset by DM depreciation against the dollar.

Technical View: The British pound lost 0.4 per cent versus the U.S. dollar during the week ended April 15. Sentiment is still neutral. The currency remains in its multi-month trading range, and short term momentum appears to have bottomed. However, medium term momentum continues to offer little definition. The lower end of the trading range at 1.46 U.S./\$ is support; a break below that would allow for at least a test of the 1993 low near \$1.43 and possibly long term support at \$1.40-\$1.42.

The \$1.50-\$1.51 range is viewed as first resistance. A rally through second resistance at \$1.55 would set the stage for a challenge of the long term benchmark at \$1.60. The DM cross-rate pulled back to 2.52. Short term momentum is peaking even as medium term momentum oscillators remain weak. A break below 2.485 would set the stage for a challenge of 2.43-2.44. Resistance is at 2.53-2.56.

International experts push for higher interest in Middle East tourism

BEIT MERY, Lebanon (AFP) — Lebanon could use the legacy left by 15 years of war to its advantage to boost tourism in the country and the region with Beirut as an important attraction, international experts said.

And they called on the private sector in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan to invest in three countries at the end of a conference here to develop regional tourism.

Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, which signed a treaty last year to activate a three-nation travel circuit, also pledged to meet again in June to discuss plans to promote 1995 as the Year of Arab Tourism.

Geoffrey Gray-Forton, chairman of the U.K.-based consultancy firm Meetings World Associates, urged tourism officials and tour operators to act quickly and prepare for an expected boom ahead of peace with Israel.

"If I were them, I would be on the phone early tomorrow morning to the heads of the tourism ministries in the three countries, the national carriers, tour operators, investors and say can we meet Monday to pool our resources."

Mr. Gray-Forton was speaking at the first travel and tourism conference held in post-war Lebanon at a hotel in Beit Mery, a mountain resort overlooking Beirut.

Kenneth Gazzard, another speaker at the two-day forum who was on his first visit to Lebanon, said: "Prior to coming here people said to me 'you must be crazy'. I would say that 80 per cent of people in England still feel there is a very hairy-scarey situation here. They don't identify Beirut with the rest of Lebanon," said Mr. Gazzard, former president of the E. F. MacDonald International Incentive travel company.

"There was such awesome publicity over the years about Beirut," said Mr. Gazzard referring to the 1975-1990 civil war which was marked by cross-city shelling, bombings and the kidnapping and murder of foreigners.

Mr. Gazzard said he had a "pretty frightening drive from the airport" because of the extent of destruction he saw along the way but realised after talking to people and visiting archaeological sites "that the situation was not so tragic."

"The problem of Beirut could be in itself an attraction," he said, suggesting that the authorities set aside a segment of the destroyed city centre as a war monument.

Mr. Gray-Forton said in the long run, and particularly after Arabs and Israelis make peace, regional tourism should be expanded to include other countries in the area such as Israel, Egypt, Turkey and Cyprus.

He said he believed there was an "avalanche of interest" in the Middle East, a rich region in Roman, Phoenician, Byzantine and Arab heritage.

"For about two generations people flew over the region to South Asia but hardly ever stopped," adding the time had come to rediscover the Middle East.

"If people are well prepared there is no reason why they can't enjoy Lebanon, but for a start it is necessary to tell them where is Lebanon and that Beirut is only a part of it," Mr. Gazzard added.

A representative of American Express travel related services, which moved from Lebanon to the Gulf at the start of the war, stressed that Lebanon, Syria and Jordan had more to offer to attract foreign visitors than the neighbouring Arab Gulf states "where the sites are all artificial."

Francesco Frangilli, deputy secretary-general of the World Travel Organisation (WTO), announced the WTO's regional committee would be meeting in Beirut in June to examine further ways of promoting regional tourism.

A study conducted by the WTO in 1993 predicts that 11 million tourists will visit the Middle East by 2000 and 18 million by 2010.

Mr. Gray-Forton said the figures were "pessimistic."

The conference was attended by delegates from more than 10 European and Arab countries, including Syrian Tourism Minister Mohammad Abu Al Shamah as well as an official Jordanian delegation led by Ghassan Al Mofleh.

Lebanon, which has embarked on an ambitious post-war reconstruction programme, is the current chairman of the world tourist organisation for 1994, which has been declared the international year of tourism.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY APRIL 30, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Eight planetary aspects keep things moving today and you will be kept busy at regular routines and making a study of your financial condition, with an eye as to how you can improve things.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You have important tasks to do that should not be neglected for some passing pleasure, or you could regret it later at some future time.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Make those plans for the day's activities and then carry through with them carefully. Keep active and keep boredom away.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Attend to those home duties which are impossible to do during the work week and have more harmony there with your loved ones.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Show that you will go to any length to please family members. Engage in your favourite hobby with congenial comrades.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is a good day to tackle any repairs needed on your property and make changes to give you added comfort. Use care in motion.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Go after whatever you want most today and get good

results. Take time to be with good friends and have a good time in whatever activity you pursue.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Analyse your life and know how to make it more productive and satisfying in the future. Relax and ease tension that exist by all those around you.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are now able to gain a personal aim that has been difficult to get in the past. Turn new acquaintances into friends you want around.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Be more concerned with getting public work done today and get good results. Take no risks with your reputation or you could lose it.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You can now plan to have greater abundance in the future and be happier. Be more willing to cooperate with others you are associated with.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Handle routine chores early in the day so you will have more time for recreation later. Strive for increased happiness with those at home.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Contact good friends who are too busy during the work week and exchange personal views. Take good care of your health so you can be physically fit.

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

NUGLE

SAREE

TANTIA

ZARLID

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

(Answers Monday)

Yesterday's Jumbles: PAUSE UNWED HALVED NEPHEW

Answer: How the pitcher felt after he was sent to the showers — ALL WASHED UP

THE Daily Crossword by George Urquhart

ACROSS

1 Petal quirels

6 Tranquil

10 College official

14 Knicker for

15 Woodwind

16 Wheel shaft

17 Cat, racetrack

19 — laced

20 Watch sharply

21 Au naturel

22 Tavern

24 Marshy brook

25 Occupied

26 Sound system

28 High point

33 Thin as

34 — de file gras

35 Attends arena

36 Speech

37 merriment

38 — to the beach

39 — arms (ready to fight)

39 Genesis name

40 Musical fastener

41 Overweight

42 Convention

43 Attends arena

44 Airport

45 Nai King

46 New Orleans

47 Fountain

48 Casual in style

50 Branded drink

51 "Norme"

54 VIP's car

55 1985 Horse of the Year

58 Once again

59 Tiny amount

60 Category

61 Ozair Williams

62 Official stamp

63 Sided

DOWN

1 Letter enc

2 Fries

3 Top-notch

4 Tooter

5 Short-legged

6 Modern apt

7 Rose's love

8 Reilly parcel

9 Gauged

10 Racetrack bet

11 Montreal player

12 In addition

13 Las Vegas sign

18 Soft: pret

23 — was saying

24 Horse-drawn

25 Climbing pepper

26 Dealer's dish

27 Social group

28 Atteler item

29 Mrs.

30 Drive forward

31 Flavoring herb

32 Dressed to the

34 Bubble

37 Logical

38 Breakdown

41 Indignity

42 Obscured

44 Post

45 Of punishment

46 Ladder shot

48 Evergreen tree

49 August

50 Key letter

51 Ladder step

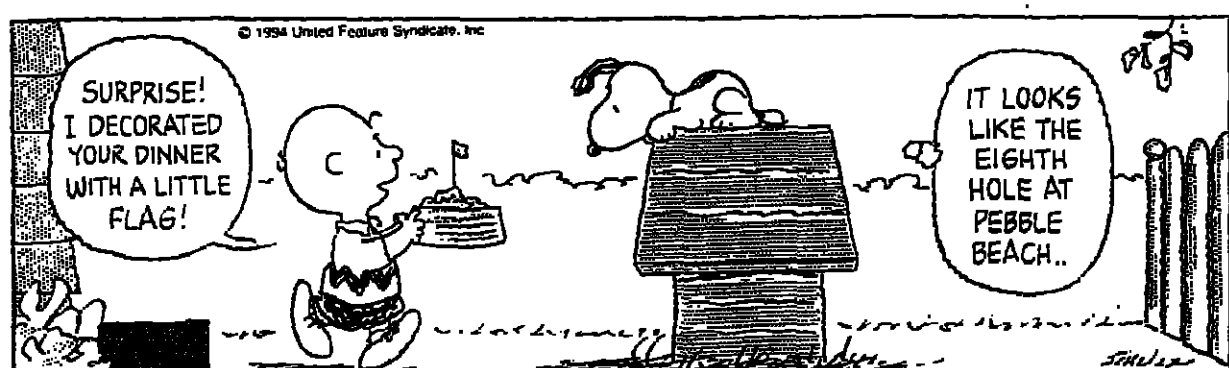
52 Land measure

53 — out (made do)

54 Edgar Allan

57 Garden plot

Peanuts



Mutt'n'Jeff



Mediators push for Bosnia truce amid fears of new front

SARAJEVO (R) — Western and Russian mediators met Bosnia Serbs Friday to urge them to agree a truce with the Muslim-led government as fears grew that fresh fighting could break out in the north between the warring sides.

The "contact group" led by U.S. Ambassador Charles Redman and Russian envoy Aleksandr Nikiforov, talked for two hours with the Bosnian Serb leadership at Pale outside Sarajevo. They refused to comment afterwards on the outcome.

The group faces the uphill task of bridging Serb insistence on a permanent ceasefire and Muslim demands for a shorter truce lasting only two or three months.

It met Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic in the Bosnian capital Thursday.

"The first thing on the agenda, as we see it on our side, is to have a cessation of hostilities as soon as possible," Jean Pierre Massat, the Geneva conference on ex-Yugoslavia representative in the group, said in Sarajevo.

Mr. Izetbegovic said his gov-

ernment would back a temporary ceasefire of two to three months to allow time for peace negotiations to settle territorial disputes.

But the Serbs, who control 70 per cent of Bosnia, are arguing for a permanent ceasefire. The Bosnian government says this would allow the Serbs to hold on to captured land while stalling on a final peace settlement.

As the contact group met the Serbs, peace mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg had talks in Norway with Russian special envoy Vitaly Churkin on former Yugoslavia.

If the contact group makes progress, the U.S., Russia, France, Britain and Germany could begin negotiations next week on a joint policy towards the Bosnian conflict and the lifting of U.N. sanctions against Serbian-led rump Yugoslavia.

The initiative follows international efforts, including the threat of NATO air strikes, which halted a Serb assault on the Muslim town of Gorazde in east Bosnia at the weekend.

But there are fears that without swift action to build on a current lull, fresh fighting could break out between Serbs and Muslims in northern Bosnia.

The Bosnian Serb Army (BSA) has accused the Muslim forces of preparing an assault on the corridor across northern Bosnia which joins Serb possessions in the east and west of the former Yugoslav republic.

The United States said intelligence reports showed the BSA was moving men and weapons to the area around Brcko, the weakest point in the corridor.

Meanwhile, U.N. Protection Force spokesman Eric Chaperon said more peacekeeping troops were being sent to Gorazde.

A British company of 100 to 150 men was expected to head for Gorazde Friday in Saxon armoured vehicles, together with a headquarters unit and combat engineers who would start clearing mines around the town's water-supply plant.

Mr. Chaperon said a Ukrai-

nian company was also being readied to leave in the next day or so. There are currently about 500 U.N. soldiers in Gorazde.

In Zagreb, Croatia accused rebel Serbs holding a third of its territory of not complying with the terms of a U.N.-brokered ceasefire and called on the international community to exert pressure on them.

Hrvoje Sarinic, chief Croatian negotiator in talks on the rebel-held Krajina region, said in a letter to U.N. special envoy Yasushi Akashi that Serbs had failed to withdraw heavy weapons from a 20-kilometre zone along part of the 1,600 kilometre (1,000 miles) demarcation line.

Sarinic also accused the Serbs of failing to pull back infantry as required and refusing to accept deployment of joint police patrols in buffer zones.

A U.N. spokesman admitted there were problems with the implementation of the month-old ceasefire, but said they did not jeopardise the peace process.



U.S. marshalls escort Aldrich Ames (centre) out of federal court after he pleaded guilty to espionage and tax evasion charges and was sentenced to life in prison (AFP photo)

'Most damaging spy' gets life sentence in U.S.

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (AP) — Aldrich Ames, the highest-paid and highest-ranking Russian spy ever caught inside the CIA, was sentenced to life in prison without parole in what a prosecutor called "the most damaging spy case in the history of this country."

Mr. Ames, 52, pleaded guilty without a trial and admitted being paid \$2.5 million by the Soviet Union and then Russia since April 1985 for U.S. secrets.

Once head of counterintelligence in the CIA's Soviet-East Europe section, Mr. Ames admitted disclosing the identities of 10 Russian officials and one East European who were spying for the United States or Great Britain.

Prosecutors said at least four Soviet KGB or GRU (military intelligence) agents among the 11 were executed.

"He traded people's lives for \$2.5 million," U.S. attorney Helen Fahey said.

In Moscow, President Boris Yeltsin charged the United States had turned the Ames case into an anti-Russian political campaign, according to remarks published Thursday.

He told Russian intelligence officers that the United States is increasing its spying in Russia, but thinks Russia has no right to do the same in the United States.

Mr. Ames said he never learned the fate of those he betrayed. But reading his first public statement since his Feb. 21 arrest, Ames expressed "deepest sympathy" for those "who may have suffered from my actions."

He professed "profound shame and guilt" for "this betrayal of trust, done for the basest motives" — money to pay debts.

Nevertheless, Mr. Ames

told the court, he did not believe he had "noticeably damaged" the United States or "noticeably aided" Moscow.

But prosecutors said in court papers, "Ames' compromise of these penetrations of the Soviet military and intelligence services deprived the United States of extremely valuable intelligence material for years to come."

Ames' Colombian-born wife, Rosario, 41, also pleaded guilty to conspiring to commit espionage and evade income taxes. The government said she aided and supported her husband's treachery without ever handling or transmitting secrets to the Russians.

U.S. District Judge Claude Hilton deferred her sentencing until Aug. 26 so the government has time to see whether Mr. Ames fulfills his agreement to tell investigators everything he disclosed, how he operated and any help he may have received.

In another part of the deal, the Ameses agreed to give the government any future payments they might earn for the sale of their stories and all their assets.

Mr. Ames said in April 1985 he sold the Soviet KGB the identities of several Soviet citizens who appeared to be working for the CIA inside the Soviet Union, but whom he believed actually were still loyal to the KGB.

Months later, "I did something which is still not entirely explicable even to me. Without preconditions or any demand for payment, I volunteered to the KGB information identifying virtually all Soviet agents of the CIA and other American and foreign services known to me," Mr. Ames said, adding that he was surprised when the KGB paid him \$2 million.

Seoul rebuffs North's offer; urges nuclear inspections

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea Friday rejected a North Korean call to replace an existing armistice with a peace treaty, urging Pyongyang to allow full outside inspections of its nuclear facilities.

"Resolution of the nuclear problem is the priority task," the South's Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

No peace treaty was signed at the end of the Korean war, 1950-53, only an armistice, meaning that technically both sides are still at war.

But Seoul accused Pyongyang of making the proposal to "blur the core issue of the (nuclear) problem."

"The issue of establishing a new mechanism guaranteeing peace as proposed by the North is one that should be settled between South and North Korea, not between the U.S. and North Korea," it said.

The statement followed reports from New York that North Korea hinted at accepting additional nuclear checks demanded by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

"We are willing to exceptionally allow one more inspection after watching the attitude of the U.S. and the IAEA," local newspapers quoted Pak Gil-Yon, the North's U.N. envoy, as saying.

The envoy did not elaborate

on his remarks were seen here as indicating Pyongyang might allow IAEA inspectors to check a controversial radioactive laboratory, which the IAEA says is a nuclear reprocessing facility.

In March, Pyongyang barred IAEA inspectors from the lab. Aside from the lab, North Korea has invited the Vienna-based nuclear watchdog to witness the replacement of fuel rods at a five-megawatt reactor in Yongbyon.

Unconfirmed press reports here said the IAEA had accepted the proposal on condition that they be later allowed to sample the fuel rods to estimate the amount of plutonium the North might have stashed for manufacturing weapons.

On Thursday, U.S. and North Korea officials met in New York for the first time in two months to discuss the nuclear standoff.

The U.S. side said it would scrap a U.S.-South Korea joint military exercise, Team Spirit, scheduled in November, and would resume high-level talks with Pyongyang, if the latter reached an agreement on inspections with the IAEA.

In its proposal for a peace treaty Thursday, Pyongyang demanded talks be held with Washington on ending decades of cold war hostility between the two sides and bury the past.

Berlusconi gets nod to form government

ROME (AP) — Holding onto his empire of TV networks, at least for now, Silvio Berlusconi will tackle the task of forming Italy's first postwar conservative-led government by breaking with another tradition.

Mr. Berlusconi said he would begin Monday to lay the groundwork for his government by first sounding out labour and industrial leaders about Italy's recession-hit economy, then would come the turn of politicians.

Mr. Berlusconi's probable coalition partners are the anti-bureaucratic Northern League and the National Alliance, heirs to Benito Mussolini's political legacy who shortly before the election disavowed their neo-fascist roots.

Some of his allies, however, are worried that Mr. Berlusconi's vast media, merchandising and real estate holdings would pose potential conflicts of interest.

But the tycoon made plain that he wasn't about to relinquish control of the sprawling interests that made him one of the richest men in Italy.

"There already is an anti-trust law," to cover such matters, Mr. Berlusconi said, adding there were no immediate plans to sell any of his networks. But critics have contended that that law was tailor-made for Mr. Berlusconi, allowing him to keep his three networks, which dominate the private airwaves.

With his Fininvest Stations' chief competitor consisting of the three channels of RAI state TV, running the country would mean Mr. Berlusconi could have influence on most of what Italians watch on their screens, from entertainment to talk shows, to newscasts.

Also in his empire are the country's largest newsweekly, Panorama, and the winningest major league soccer team, AC Milan. It also includes a supermarket chain that spans Italy, Malta and Slovenia.

Berlusconi-run publicity companies advertise the supermarkets' merchandise, and there are cinemas and film production and real estate companies.

President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro summoned Mr. Berlusconi Thursday to the presidential palace on the Quirinal Hill and asked him to put together Italy's 53rd postwar government.

Mr. Scalfaro was widely expected to name Mr. Berlusconi, after parliamentary elections last month in which Mr. Berlusconi's fledgling coalition ended a half-century of Christian Democrat dominance.

Mr. Berlusconi said his government would immediately create a kind of watchdog panel made up of three jurists — already chosen by him — to come up "with a formula to guarantee" no conflict of interests. He wasn't specific, but pledged his government would be "scrupulously impartial" in its workings.

"Balance and good sense — this will be style of government that the premier will have to guarantee to his allies, to parliament and to the country," Mr. Berlusconi said.

His plan for the three watchdogs drew a quick thumbs down from parliament's largest opposition group, the former Communists, a few hours before Mr. Berlusconi's nomination, Achille Occhetto, that party's leader, signed a petition in a drive to get a voter referendum to revamp anti-trust laws.

Mr. Berlusconi's conservative alliance has a majority in the lower Chamber of Deputies, but fell just short of the majority in the Senate.

Mr. Berlusconi's own party before the election, known as Forza Italia (Go, Italy), the party's leadership draws heavily from his business associates.

One potential stumbling block is allies' demands for key cabinet posts. Northern League leader Umberto Bossi quickly reiterated claims on the Interior, Treasury, Industry and other ministries.

Mr. Berlusconi's appointment at the presidential palace was carried live by one of his networks, while viewers waited for word on whether he had gotten the nod from Mr. Scalfaro, ran scenes of Mr. Berlusconi victorious on election night.

One of the guarantees that his networks would properly transmit information, promised Mr. Berlusconi, would be the "professionalism" of its managers and journalists.

The businessman also promised to make government "less invasive but more efficient."

Top British cop caught speeding at his own men

LONDON (R) — A top British police officer was caught speeding by his own men on the day they began a campaign to enforce speed limits, newspapers reported Friday. Chief Constable Keith Povey, head of the Leicestershire Police Force in central England was caught driving at 80 miles (128 kilometres), per hour in a 50 miles (80 kilometres) an hour zone. Chief Povey, 51, who told officers to treat him like any other motorist, was ordered to appear in court next month. He could face a driving ban. A new campaign against speeding has launched across Britain, using a graphic television commercial showing a young girl being knocked down and killed.

Michael English big winner at Gospel awards

NASHVILLE, Tennessee (AP) — Michael English was named artist of the year and top male vocalist Thursday night at the Gospel Music Association's 25th annual Dove Awards. "I can't believe this is happening," a stunned English told the audience at the Grand Ole Opry House. He also won for Best Contemporary Album for Hope. Seven Curtis Chapman won three awards: songwriter of the Year, Contemporary Song for Go Where You Want, and Best Long-Form Video for The Live Adventure. "Thanks to all of you who have planted seeds in me," he told the audience. Twila Paris won top female vocalist for the second straight year. In Christ Alone, written by Shawn Craig and Don Koch, was voted Song of the Year, and the quartet Point of Grace was named Best New Artist. Awards were announced in 34 categories during a live two-hour broadcast on cable TV's the Family Channel. Winners were chosen by 3,000 members of the Gospel Association. The honours, known as the Academy Awards of Gospel Music, are called the Dove Awards in reference to the bird mentioned in the Bible.

Briton stripped of doctorate for cheating

LONDON (R) — Britain's prestigious Oxford University has stripped former student of his doctorate after he was accused of plagiarism — only the second time this century the institution has taken such a step. Garry Owen Hughes, who studied at Oxford's Trinity College from 1982 to 1986, lost the title after his former supervisor was alerted to similarities between Mr. Hughes' thesis and one published in the United States, a university spokeswoman said. "I had been surprised by the great improvement in Garry's work but I suppose I attributed this to my teaching," the Daily Telegraph newspaper quoted Professor Jack Pole as saying. Mr. Hughes, who now works in insurance in Philadelphia but comes from western England, is accused of copying parts of a Princeton University text into his doctorate thesis, "the redefinition of Pennsylvania politics 1740-90," the spokeswoman said. She said it was very rare for university diplomas to be withdrawn and officials knew of only one other such case at Oxford this century.

Part of frame of The Scream found in Norway

OSLO (R) — Part of the frame of the stolen Norwegian masterpiece The Scream has been found in what could be a cryptic sign of the thieves' work, the National Gallery said. But the "bizarre" find of the 95 cm (37 inch) long piece of gilt-covered wood at a disused bus stop outside Oslo also stirred fears that the 1893 painting by Norway's Edvard Munch, one of the best-known in the world, may have been damaged. "It's extremely difficult to evaluate the importance of the find. But it must have been planted there... It indicates that they are trying to establish contact," Knut Berg, director of the National Gallery, told Reuters. The Scream, showing a waif-like figure wide-mouthed in terror beneath a blood-red sky, was stolen from the National Gallery on Feb. 12, the day of the opening of the Lillehammer Olympics. "It's a fragile painting. Rumours that it had been taken out of the frame have now been confirmed. That makes us awfully nervous," Mr. Berg said.

Refugees flood out of Rwanda

MULINDI, Rwanda (R) — A tide of Rwandan refugees poured into neighbouring Tanzania Friday, fleeing massacres and civil war as aid workers raced to save hundreds of thousands of displaced people from starvation in Rwanda's chaos.

Aid agency officials said up to 200,000 Rwandans arrived in northwestern Tanzania Thursday and Friday and a long column of men, women and children were still fleeing southeastern Rwanda.

"This is a major humanitarian disaster. We expect the number to swell to over 500,000," said Sheila Wilson, chief delegate for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Tanzania.

"We cannot cope. We need transport, storage facilities and manpower," said Adam Kimbisa of the Tanzanian Red Cross.

Aid workers said many refugees were crossing Rusizi Bridge into Tanzania as Tanzanian troops had stopped guarding it and Rwanda's side of the frontier was no longer sealed by Rwandan troops.

"The security situation in southern Rwanda is worsening

and the border has opened up so these huge numbers are arriving," said an official of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

He said UNHCR had enough blankets and shelter material in position for the refugees in Tanzania and was sending more staff and arranging land convoys and airlifts of food.

Before the flood of refugees to Tanzania, a total of 20,000 Rwandans had reached Tanzania, 38,000 fled to Burundi, 5,500 escaped to Uganda and 3,500 had taken refuge in Zaire, the UNHCR said.

In addition, 175,000 Burundian refugees in camps in Rwanda returned home after the start of massacres and renewed civil war following the death of the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi in a rocket attack on their plane near Rwanda's capital on April 6.

U.N. and aid officials say the slaughter in Rwanda now in its fourth week, especially massacres of members of the minority Tutsi tribe by Hutu troops and extremist militias, amounts to a campaign of genocide.

Aid agencies estimate the death toll at 100,000 but fear it is considerably more. Piles of rotting corpses are fouling water supplies, threatening a double disaster for survivors of the butchery.

Many of the more than 40,000 refugees, mostly Tutsis, who crossed the Burundian and Zairean borders have told horrific stories of troops and militiamen trying to hunt them down.

Aid workers said many had been deliberately maimed and had gruesome wounds from machetes, axes and knives.

They said the easiest frontier for refugees to cross was Uganda but relatively small numbers had fled there as most felt safe in areas held by the rebel Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF).

Fighting rock suburb of Burundi capital

Meanwhile, shelling and shooting rocked a suburb of the Burundian capital of Bujumbura overnight and Friday apparently at the start of an army campaign to disarm gunmen by force.

Japan cabinet provokes mistrust, election calls

TOKYO (R) — Ministers in Japan's new minority government woke up Friday to the depressing news that much of the country had written them off before they even started work.

"It's sad but we can't find words for a government that lost the people's confidence before it was formed," said the influential Asahi Shimbun in an editorial.

After helping elect Tsutomu Hata as prime minister, the Socialist Party left the coalition in a huff Monday after conservative coalition members grouped together to try to marginalise their left wing partners.

This left Mr. Hata heading Japan's first minority government for nearly four decades, and many analysts blame him and his close allies, especially the shadowy Ichiro Ozawa, for causing the split.

They say it was the result of taking a power game too far, and indicated they made light of their responsibilities as government leaders of the world's second biggest economy.

"The Hata government has completely betrayed our hopes," Asahi said.

Nitson Keizai Shimbun, a newspaper for business executives, said the government would not be able to get anything done.

"It is impossible to expect anything from the minority Hata cabinet on big policy issues," it said in an editorial.

Mr. Hata's first task is to pass the 1994-95 budget, now four weeks late, before the current session of parliament ends on June 30. After that it should go to the polls, the paper said.

Passing the budget, which the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and other opposition parties appear positive on, is one thing. But after this has passed, violent changes in the scene are expected and the future prospects are completely opaque," the paper said.

"It is a situation where it is necessary to dissolve the lower house and call an election when the budget has passed."

But the 58-year-old Hata said Thursday he would avoid calling an early general election, not due until 1997.

The previous government, under Morihiro Hosokawa, passed a package of reform bills in January, including an overhaul of the electoral system. But an early poll would go under the old rules, benefiting the LDP and Socialists.

Toru Hayano, a member of Asahi's editorial committee, said in a caustic frontpage analysis the government's fragility would make it hard for foreign governments to trust it.

"Apart from the chaotic period after the war, the framework of authority has surely never looked so fragile," he wrote. "Diplomats are worried that from now on, when Japan's government promises something, the other country might not trust it."

Mr. Hata said he wanted to reopen stalled trade talks with the United States aimed at reducing Japan's vast trade surplus, though he added that now was not the time to visit Washington to break the deadlock.

Yeltsin foes: Peace pact is propaganda

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin's political foes charged Friday that a civic accord pact signed by about 200 leaders was a "propaganda campaign" orchestrated by the Kremlin and said it lacked concrete applications.

"This declaration, despite its solemn signatures, in reality changes nothing in the life of Russia," charged members of the Accord for Russia Movement, a broad-based opposition coalition that includes Mr. Yeltsin's arch rival, former Vice-President Alexander Rutskoi.

"We are ready to seek accord on the basis of concrete actions and not by participating in an extraordinary propaganda campaign whose slogans and watchwords serve to cover up impotent and destructive policies," they said in a statement released at a news conference.

Russia's political, social and religious leaders signed Thursday a pact on social accord, an agreement proposed by Mr. Yeltsin to lay ground rules for political conduct up until the 1996 presidential election.

Signatories pledged to refrain from calling for early elections and pushing for amendments to Mr. Yeltsin's new post-Soviet constitution. Two demands that led to a violent uprising by the former headline parliament last October.

Leaders of the Communist Party, the conservative Agrarian Party and the reformist Yabloko Bloc refused to sign the pact.

Communist leader Gennady Zyuganov and Agrarian leader Mikhail Lapshin have joined Accord for Russia and plan to hold a founding conference on May 19 during which delegates were to issue a rival declaration on civic accord.

In the statement, opposition leaders stressed that Mr. Yeltsin's peace pact would lead to "the collapse of the scientific-industrial complex in the country, large-scale plundering of state property and of the treasury, degradation of our people and the destruction of our national religion and culture."

"Today, we must first of all agree on a change in the course of government that would in-

clude, as a priority, measures to save Russia," they added.

The statement was presented to the press by Mr. Zyuganov, Mr. Lapshin, nationalist deputy Sergei Baburin, centrist Stanislav Govorukhin, deputy speaker of the upper house of parliament, Pyotr Romanov and a Rutskoi supporter, Vladimir Lipitsky.

Mr. Lipitsky said that although Rutskoi did not attend the news conference, he was aware of the contents of the statement denouncing the Yeltsin pact and "fully supported" it.

Mr. Baburin called for the resignation of Duma speaker Ivan Rybkin, who signed the Yeltsin accord on behalf of the lower house of parliament, but Mr. Zyuganov and Mr. Lapshin disagreed.

Supporters of the pact had said it was important that it be signed ahead of May Day Sunday, after anti-government protests that turned into riots on the holiday last year, left a policeman dead and nearly 600 people injured.

Meanwhile, investigators from the United States, France and Taiwan, as well as 950 Japanese police, continued to search for the cause of the crash Tuesday night at Nagoya Airport.

Japanese investigators said they found no sign of an explosion in either engine of the Airbus A300-600R that slammed to the ground and burst into flames after the pilot radioed in that he was going to try landing again.

Japan's Ministry of Transportation said the maker of the plane's engines, Pratt and Whitney, had been ordered by the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration in 1991 to improve the design of the compressor blades.

A ministry official said it was not yet known whether the engines on the plane, bought in January 1991, had actually been updated as required under the order.

Mass funeral held for Japan crash victims

TOKYO (AP) — Relatives of Taiwanese victims of the China Airlines jet crash that killed 265 people earlier this week held a mass funeral Friday, and police said they have identified a woman who survived the crash but had been unconscious.

The survivor — one of only eight people spared when the jet slammed into flames — was identified as Mina Sofia Uchihashi, a 21-year-old Philippine citizen, according to police in Aichi, the prefecture in central Japan where the crash occurred Tuesday.

Mrs. Uchihashi was identified by her Japanese husband, who had been searching for her at a morgue set up next to the airport where the jet crashed in a failed landing attempt.

Another 38 bodies were identified at the morgue by Friday afternoon, leaving eight still unknown.

Mrs. Uchihashi suffered broken ribs and intestinal ruptures. The other survivors — five Japanese and two Taiwanese — also are hospitalised with serious injuries. She regained consciousness briefly Thursday night, but doctors said she was sleeping Friday and heavily sedated.

The flight from Taipei was carrying 256 passengers and 15 crew members. Most of the passengers were from Japan and Taiwan, though 17 Filipinos and one South Korean were also aboard.

Families of the Taiwanese passengers killed in Thursday's crash gathered Friday morning for a mass funeral, many kneeling beside coffins draped with shiny, gold-coloured cloth.

A Buddhist monk chanted prayers for the dead and burned incense sticks to placate their souls.

National tennis team leaves for Bangkok

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's junior national tennis team left Amman for Bangkok Friday to take part in the qualifying round of the NTT world junior tennis championship which will take place in Japan in August.

The Kingdom will be represented by three promising young players — Tharwat Al Qaisi, Ahmad Al Hadid and Jamal Olaby. The delegation is headed by Jordan Tennis Federation (JTF) member Ibrahim Al Hadid.

Jordan will be competing for qualification alongside 11 other Asian teams in the Asia/Oceania qualifying round which will be in Thailand May 1-9.

Mr. Hadid told the Jordan Times that this would be the first time Jordan plays in such a competition reserved for under-14 players only. Among 85 countries contesting qualification worldwide, the only other Arab countries will be playing in the African group. They are: Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Sudan.

The Kingdom's team will be competing alongside Australia, China, Taipei, Hong

Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

Following the qualifying round, three teams will represent Asia in the world championship.

In addition to the three Asian teams, 13 other nations will compete in the world championship: 6 from Europe, 2 from North America, 3 from South America, 1 from Africa in addition to Japan, the host nation.

The JTF is now keen on preparing a young national team that will hopefully best represent the Kingdom in years to come.

The men's national team is now in a difficult transitory phase after the retirement last year of the Kingdom's top player Hani Al Ali following Jordan's relegation to group 3 in the 1993 Davis Cup competition.

This year, the promising Laith Al Azzouni led Jordan's team to the Davis Cup competition in Qatar April 4-10 where they played Bahrain, Lebanon, Brunei, and Uzbekistan.

Jordan remained in group 3 after only managing a win over Brunei, while Uzbekistan was promoted to group 2.

Atlanta Hawks, Orlando Magic lose home-court advantage

The Associated Press

IT DID NOT take the Atlanta Hawks and Orlando Magic long to lose the home-court advantage in the playoffs.

In the first two games of the first round of the NBA playoffs, the Miami Heat and Indiana Pacers won the surprise winners Thursday. Miami had its first playoff win in four tries, an 88-85 victory over Atlanta at the Omni.

And the Pacers, on a 3-pointer by Byron Scott with two seconds left, kept Orlando from winning the first playoff game in franchise history, edging the Magic 89-88 at Orlando, Fla.

First-round play in the other four best-of-5 series was to begin Friday night with New Jersey at New York, Cleveland at Chicago, Portland at Houston and Golden State at Phoenix.

The Heat entered the playoffs coming off six losses in their last eight games. Atlanta finished the season with six victories in its final eight games, good enough for the top seeding — and home advantage — in the Eastern Conference playoffs.

The advantage, however, quickly shifted to the visitors.

Miami held Atlanta without a field goal in the final seven minutes and erased a 77-69 deficit in the final 10 minutes. Glen Rice made a tip-in that gave Miami a 90-87 lead with 32 seconds remaining, then added two free throws 20 seconds later to stretch the lead to 92-87.

"I'd say it's the biggest tip I ever got," Rice said.

Miami, swept by Chicago in 1992 in the team's only other postseason appearance, carries a 1-0 lead in the series into Saturday night's game, also in the Omni. The Hawks won their last seven home games in the regular season and posted a 36-5 record at the Omni going into the playoffs.

"This is a very big victory, I guess the biggest the franchise has had," Rice said. "We win our first playoff game. We finally win in this building. I think we put a lot of pressure on Atlanta."

Steve Smith led Miami with 22 points and Bimbo Coles scored 17. Kevin Willis led the Hawks with 17 points and 16 rebounds. Craig Ehlo added 15 points.

Pacers 89, Magic 88

Scott's winning shot capped Indiana's comeback from a 17-point deficit. Shaquille O'Neal's tip-in put Orlando ahead 88-86 with 25 seconds to go, but Indiana then got four shots at tying it out going ahead. Rik Smits missed a 12-footer, Indiana missed tip and Reggie Miller missed on a 3-pointer before Scott struck from the right wing.

Miller led Indiana with 24 points and Scott had 12. O'Neal scored 24 points and Dennis Scott 15 for the Magic. Game 2 is Saturday night.

Spurs 106, Jazz 89

At San Antonio, the Spurs lost all five of their games to Utah during the season. But San Antonio won the sixth — and most important — game as David Robinson scored 25 points and Terry Cummings added 18. The Spurs opened a 24-point lead five minutes into the third quarter.

Karl Malone had 36 points and 10 rebounds for Utah. Jazz coach Jerry Sloan was ejected with 7:37 remaining for arguing an offensive foul call.

Sanchez advances in Citizen Cup

HAMBURG, Germany (AP) — Defending champion Arantxa Sanchez Vicario shook off a knee injury Thursday and routed Argentina's Bettina Fulco-Villella, 6-3, 6-0, to reach the quarterfinals of the Citizen Cup.

The Spaniard suffered a strain in practice Monday, but showed no signs of the injury in rolling past Fulco-Villella, a 1988 French Open quarterfinalist.

"It still aches when I'm running, but it's much better," Sanchez Vicario said.

On Tuesday, in struggling to beat qualifier Elena Wagner of Bulgaria in three sets, the world no. 2 was visibly slowed by her injury.

Second-seeded Sanchez Vicario was challenged only once during the match by Fulco-Villella, who has fallen to world no. 137 after suffering a shoulder injury.

By lashing some backhand passing shots, the Argentine won two straight games in the first set to cut Sanchez Vicario's lead to 3-2. But two games later, Sanchez Vicario took control of the match by breaking her opponent's serve.

She next faces Georgia's

Leila Meskhi, who upset eighth-seeded Katerina Maleeva, 6-0, 4-6, 6-1.

Germany's Antje Huber, coming off a three-month layoff due to back problems, also reached the quarterfinals by edging Poland's Katarzyna Nowak, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1, while Bulgaria's Magdalena Maleeva ousted Czech Pavlina Radzova, 6-1, 6-4.

Sanchez Vicario, who won at Barcelona last week, is trying to reach her fifth final in seven tournaments this year.

If she succeeds, the Spaniard is likely to face a rematch against Steffi Graf, a seven-time winner of the tournament whom she dethroned last year.

Graf, whose next opponent is fifth-seeded Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria, is unbeaten in 1994. She did not play Thursday.

"I don't think about Steffi," Sanchez Vicario said. "I just think about my next match."

Huber needed two hours and 32 minutes to dispatch Nowak, who is the world no. 173. The 19-year-old German is trying to break into the top 10 again after her absence from competition.

British boxer dies two days after fight

LONDON (AP) — Bradley Stone's death from brain injuries suffered in a British title fight triggered a debate over whether the sport should be banned.

Stone, 23, died Thursday night at Royal London Hospital, nearly 48 hours after falling into a coma following his defeat in a bout for the British super-bantamweight title in London.

He had collapsed at his fiancée's home a few hours after being stopped in the 10th round by a barrage of punches from opponent Richie Winton.

In a vain attempt to save his life, Stone underwent surgery Wednesday to remove a blood clot on his brain and was put on a life support system.

Stone's fiancée Donna Lawrence, his mother, brother and more than a dozen other relatives and friends were at the boxer's bedside when he was pronounced dead at 8:15 p.m. (2015 GMT) Thursday.

Stone is the first British boxer to die as a result of injuries suffered in the ring since Scottish welterweight Steve Watt in 1986.

Stone's death led to renewed calls for boxing to be banned, a position held by the British Medical Association. But neurosurgeon John Sutcliffe, who treated Stone, said he opposes a ban.

Gustafsson, Korda avoid upset in Munich tourney

MUNICH, Germany (AP) — Petr Korda of the Czech Republic and Sweden's Magnus Gustafsson avoided the rash of upsets at the BMW open by breezing to easy victories Thursday to reach the quarterfinals.

Korda routed young German Oliver Gross, playing in his first ATP tour event, 6-4, 6-2 while Gustafsson ousted countryman Magnus Larsson 6-2, 6-3.

In his first two rounds of play, four seeds were upset including second-seeded Andrei Medvedev of Ukraine and third-seeded Cedric Pioline of France.

Germany's Bernd Karbacher also advanced by outlasting Marcos Ondruska of

South Africa, 7-6 (7-3), 4-6, 6-4.

In the first set, the 26-year-old Korda jumped to a 3-0 lead against Gross, who was obviously intimidated and sprayed balls all over the court. The 20-year-old plays in Germany's club circuit.

But after Gross rallied to draw even at 4-4, Korda picked up the tempo and used his experience to pound out a one-sided victory. The veteran Czech, ranked 13th in the world, was the 1992 French Open finalist.

In the quarterfinals, Korda will square off against Gustafsson, while top-seeded Michael Stich of Germany faces eighth-seeded Wayne Ferreira of South Africa.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TAMMAM HUSSEIN
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

- Q.1—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠A K10963 J8542 ♦73
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
Pass 3 Dbl ?
What action do you take?
- Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠K83 ♠A10753 83 ♦Q72
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1- 1- ?
What do you bid now?
- Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠983 ♠A Q92 ♦AKQ73
The bidding has proceeded:
West North East South
3 ♦ Dbl Pass ?
What action do you take?
- Q.4—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AQJ107 ♠K954 ♦873 ♠6
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♦ Pass 1 ♦ Pass
2 ♦ Pass ?
What do you bid now?
- Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠KQJ87642 ♠Q3 ♠Q ♠8
Partner opens the bidding with two no trump. What do you respond?
- Q.6—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AJ4 ♠94 ♠73 ♦AKQ873
The bidding has proceeded:
East South West North
1 ♦ 2 ♦ Pass 3 ♦
Pass ?
What do you bid now?
Look for answers on Monday.

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Agassi advances to Atlanta quarterfinals

ATLANTA (R) — Just three minutes before turning 24, Andre Agassi won a closely-fought second round match late Thursday to advance to the quarterfinals at the \$300,000 ATT challenge tennis tournament.

Agassi, the third-seed and ranked 20, struggled all the way to defeat unseeded American, Richey Reneberg 4-6 6-2 6-4, closing out the win just before midnight Thursday.

Agassi will meet fellow-American, Mahival Washington in the quarterfinals.

Washington, the fourth seed, needed three sets to get past 41-year-old fellow American, Jimmy Connors, winning 6-4 3-6 6-1.

Top seeded American, Michael Chang, endured long rallies in the scorching heat with Brazil's Luiz Mattar before winning 6-3 7-5 in one hour and 57 minutes.

Second seeded Todd Martin of the U.S. easily defeated unseeded American qualifier, Brian Dunn 6-3 6-2.

Agassi looked off form in the first set with Reneberg but threw in a flurry of dropshots in the second and third sets to keep his opponent off balance.

"That's exactly what it was — a gift," Agassi said of his midnight birthday present. "I did not win that match. Richey got an assist on that one."

Connors dropped serve once in the first set with Washington



Andre Agassi

but found renewed fire in the second set, winning it with an ace.

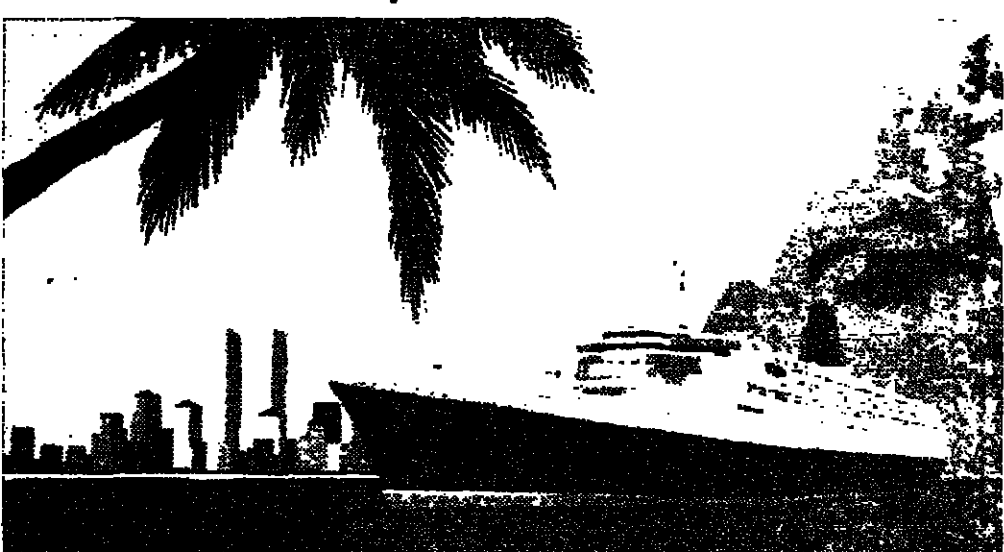
After that, the years started to show as Connors' legs slowed down. Washington began to utilize an effective lob and Connors wilted 6-1 in the third set.

"I just didn't think to lob him but once I did I thought I should have been doing it the whole match," Washington

said. Martin will next play man who convinced him to turn professional in 1980. Martin faces Sweden's Mats Wilander in the quarterfinals, a player he beat at Forest Hills four years ago.

"I beat him 7-5 6-4," Martin said of the win at Forest Hills, a special event. "It was an end-all, convincing that it was okay for me to turn pro."

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Igualmente, se informa que para cualquier reclamación deben llamar al teléfono 614166 de sábado a jueves y teléfonos 678946 y 09/953998 viernes y domingo.

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T	TOM & JERRY		OUT RAGEOUS		CONCORD '1'		The political comedy play		Coming soon		Soon	
O	The Movie		FORTUNE		A PERFECT WORLD		FORBIDDEN		Abu Awad in. The new comedy		The political comedy play:	
D	Performances: 11:00, 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.		Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		CONCORD '2'		FORBIDDEN		"A PUNCTURED BAG"		"WHAT A PEACE I"	
A	"White Palace": at 8:30 - 10:30 p.m.				MR. JONS		Every night at 8:30 p.m.		Directed by Ghassan Al Mashini		(al Salam Ya Salam)	
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NEWS IN BRIEF

'Arafat to enter Jericho in June'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat should enter the West Bank town of Jericho in the first week of June, a senior Israeli negotiator said Friday. "There is nothing to stop Yasser Arafat going to Jericho as soon as the autonomy agreement is signed on Wednesday," said the official who refused to be named. "But he will not wait until the first week of June when the Israeli army has completed its withdrawal and redeployment." The negotiator told journalists aboard a return flight to Tel Aviv from Cairo where an agreement to launch autonomy was reached on Thursday. The official also confirmed that besides freeing 5,000 Palestinian prisoners after the agreement is signed, Israel and the PLO had decided that Palestinians opposed to the peace process could also be released from jail. But he explained: "We are ready to envisage such releases only if the prisoners make a written commitment (renouncing violence) and if their hands are not stained with (Israeli) blood." Negotiations would continue on the fate of the 9,000 Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails, he said.

Observers to deploy in Hebron on May 8

TEL AVIV (AFP) — International observers for Hebron will be officially deployed in the West Bank town from May 8, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Friday. Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) agreed to the 160-strong "temporary presence" in a bid to help improve security for Palestinians after a Jewish settler massacred more than 30 Muslims in Hebron on Feb. 25. An agreement specifying the mandate of the 90 Norwegian, 35 Danish and 35 Italian will be signed in Copenhagen on Monday, spokesman Raphael said. The observers would arrive next Thursday and representative in Sarajevo, said not give a breakdown of the figures.

Iran says it will stage rally in Mecca

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran on Friday insisted it would stage an "anti-imperialist" rally in Mecca this year despite what it said was a Saudi Arabian ban. Tehran Radio quoted the official who will lead Iran's pilgrim contingent as saying there was a "divine injunction" to perform the ceremony, which is traditional for Shi'ite Muslims. The official, Hajjollah Mohammad Khatami, said the religious aspects of the pilgrimage should not be divorced from the political ones. Usually, the Iranians have chanted anti-American and anti-Western slogans during the rallies. Hajjollah Mohammad Khatami said the Saudis had banned the ceremony this year. It was not clear whether he was referring to the traditional ban on political activity, which is reiterated annually, or whether he was referring to a new — so far unpublished — Saudi ban.

300 feared dead in Mombasa disaster

MOMBASA, Kenya (AFP) — Some 300 people were believed to have died when a ferry connecting Mombasa island with the southern mainland sank early Friday, the official Kenya Broadcasting Corporation (KBC) reported. The Mtwara ferry was carrying 300 people, most of them commuters heading for work on the island, when it sank into the Indian Ocean. The ferry's maximum capacity is 150 people. There was no word on why the vessel sank. Some 50 bodies had already been recovered and transported to the city's morgue, witnesses said. Mombasa currently has only two ferries connecting the city to the southern mainland — the Mtwara ferry and the Likoni ferry.

Two British officials held in arms swoop

LONDON (R) — Two British Defence Ministry officials were held on Friday after large amounts of arms and ammunition were found in raids across the country. "Significant amounts of arms and ammunition have been recovered," a Ministry of Defence spokesman said. "At the moment there is no link with sales to terrorist organisations." The two were arrested on Thursday as a result of an internal investigation by the ministry and inquiries are continuing, the spokesman said. Both worked for the ministry's procurement division in London. Radio reports said the arrests followed two separate investigations, one into irregular arms contracts and another into the theft of weapons due to be disposed of. In a raid on the house of one of the officials in St. Albans, central England, two army trucks were used to take away large quantities of automatic rifles, pistols and ammunition, neighbours told reporters. Other simultaneous raids in Yorkshire, Northeast England, and in Essex, east of London, involved surplus military equipment earmarked for disposal.

Khmer Rouge wants talks outside Cambodia

PHNOM PENH (AP) — Prospects for holding peace talks have dimmed as the Khmer Rouge guerrilla group said it would attend only if the talks were held at a "neutral" site. Premier Prince Norodom Ranariddh had said earlier this week the talks could not be held outside Cambodia because they concerned the country's internal affairs. Officials made available Friday the text of a letter from Khmer Rouge President Kieu Samphan to King Norodom Sihanouk, who proposed holding the talks next week. The letter, dated Wednesday, said that, "in the current situation in which insecurity reigns throughout Cambodia, only a neutral place can provide conditions for the round-table meeting to proceed in an atmosphere of cordiality, national reconciliation and equality for all Cambodian sides."

China slams Clinton-Dalai Lama meeting

BEIJING (R) — China on Friday sharply criticised the U.S. president and vice-president for meeting the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, accusing them of a "serious interference" in China's internal affairs. "We demand that the U.S. side live up to its commitments on recognising Tibet as part of China's territory, abide by the basic norms governing international relations, set store by the overall interests of Sino-U.S. relations and refrain from taking actions interfering in China's internal affairs and hurting the feelings of the Chinese people," an angry statement from the Foreign Ministry said. President Bill Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore met the Dalai Lama on Thursday and discussed religious and cultural rights in Tibet with the 1989 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, the White House said.

Israel built a giant 'hummos gun'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel developed a giant peashooter to fire chickpeas up to 40 metres to try to control Palestinians during the early days of the intifada, the army weekly revealed Friday. However, the idea was abandoned by a special military department which studies riot dispersal because it was ineffective, the Bamahane magazine said. Soldiers in the department dubbed the machine, the "hummos gun," after the paste made of chickpeas eaten with virtually every meal in Israel. The army also toyed with the idea of firing glue on protesters to pin them down, but tests were a failure, the department chief Colonel Herzl said. The weekly did not give his family name for security reasons.

Li signs friendship treaty with Mongolia

ULAN BATOR (AFP) — China and Mongolia signed a landmark treaty of friendship and cooperation here Friday, replacing an obsolete 1960 accord and formalising the basis for future bilateral ties after a 30-year rift. The treaty was signed by visiting Chinese Premier Li Peng and his Mongolian counterpart Punsajin Jasray. Mr. Li, who described the signing as an "epoch-making event," said the treaty would be formulated into a legally binding document for developing long-term cooperation. The Chinese premier, who arrived here Thursday at the end of a tour of Central Asian states, signed the document following two hours of talks with Mr. Jasray that focused on the development of bilateral relations.

Aziz to visit U.N. in May

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz will come to New York next month for another round of talks on Baghdad's compliance with U.N. resolutions on the scrapping of its weapons of mass destruction and future monitoring of its arms potential. Ambassador Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. Special Commission in charge of dismantling Iraqi weapons, told reporters the talks were arranged during a visit to Baghdad from which he has just returned. A U.N. source said Mr. Aziz was expected to arrive in New York May 10 and would remain until about May 19. His visit would coincide with the Security Council's next periodic review on May 17 of Iraq's compliance with the weapons provisions of Gulf war resolutions.

Mr. Ekeus on Thursday cited "positive developments in all areas" and a major breakthrough in identifying foreign suppliers for Iraq's chemical weapons programme. Mr. Ekeus briefed the Security Council on his recent visit to Baghdad. He later told reporters, "I am quite optimistic after my talks in Iraq."

The Gulf war ceasefire says Iraq again may sell oil once Baghdad has satisfied the conditions relating to the destruction and monitoring of weapons of mass destruction. But the United States and Britain also want to attach other conditions, including some relating to human rights and the recognition of Kuwait's sovereignty.

France and other non-aligned council members say Iraq can export oil after satisfying the arms control conditions. Mr. Ekeus said he was especially pleased that Iraq, which previously withheld information about chemical weapons, recently delivered "a wealth of new documents ... it was a breakthrough."

He later told the Associated Press that the information concerned foreign suppliers of Iraq's chemical weapons programme. The information had to be verified, he said. "I can say we have positive developments in all areas, especially in chemical weapons," he said.

Mr. Ekeus circulated in the Security Council a joint Iraqi-U.N. statement saying the two sides "reviewed the considerable progress made, since the last round of high-level talks, held in New York on March 14-19, 1994."

"They noted that many actions had been undertaken in this period, including inspections to establish the baseline for, and phase in, ongoing monitoring and verification."

This referred to data regarding Iraqi facilities capable of being used for both civilian and military purposes. Such baseline information is needed to enable U.N. inspectors to carry out long-term monitoring to ensure Iraq does not again acquire forbidden nuclear, chemical, biological and longer-range ballistic missile weapons.

"Both sides reiterated their commitment to continue and accelerate intensive efforts aimed at reaching their shared objective," the joint statement said.

Import policy

Israel and the Palestinian authority will have an import policy basically similar in all respects regarding imports and customs. Nonetheless, the Palestinian authority will be able to import mutually agreed goods at customs rates differing from those prevailing in Israel, following jointly agreed import procedures. Moreover, it will be able to import goods from Arab countries, in agreed, limited quantities. Arrangements will be made for the two customs authorities to jointly operate the border crossing in Jericho and Gaza.

Monetary policy

The Palestinian authority



AFGHAN PROTEST: A Pakistani policeman on Thursday tries to disperse Afghan women demonstrators in Islamabad protesting against the failure of their leaders to reach any sort of compromise over the ongoing violence in Afghanistan (AFP photo)

Arabs have nothing to fear from Israel in common market — study

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Arabs have nothing to fear from Israel in a common market for the Middle East, a Gulf study said Friday, as the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and the Jewish state signed a landmark economic accord.

But the study by the Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) said the Arab League's 22 members must first integrate their economies before joining Israel and other countries in a single market. Although Israel has built a relatively large export-oriented industrial base, its exports are equivalent to less than 10 per cent of total Arab imports, said the study, published in the UAE daily Al Khaleej.

Israel's exports of consumer goods stood at between \$11 and \$12 billion in 1992 while Arab imports of such products exceeded \$40 billion and their total imports have remained above \$100 billion.

Israel's exports of transport equipment stood at \$900 million in 1990 and those of electrical appliances at \$1.6 billion while Arab imports of such products stood at around \$42.6 billion, the study said.

"Trade is a key component of Israel's gross domestic product, accounting for nearly 46 per cent in 1991," it said, "but the figures on Israeli exports show that they will have little impact on the imports of Arab countries."

In Paris, Israel and the PLO signed a landmark economic agreement on Friday, as part of an overall accord to launch a Palestinian self-rule in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, who signed for Israel, urged Arab countries to "remove the walls of economic boycott" and lift the embargo in force since the Jewish state was created in 1948. "None of us can afford economic boycotts," he warned, referring to stiff competition from other regions.

The Sharjah study saw benefits for both Arabs and Israel from a common market although the latter would reap more gains given its superior industries. A free trade zone in the region would give Israel access to new markets and enable it to ensure its needs in oil and other raw materials, according to the study.

In return, Arab states would find a new market for their oil and gas, but their exports of other goods would not rise greatly as the Israeli market is small.

The United States and other countries have proposed a regional common market encompassing Israel, the Arabs, Turkey and Iran, saying this would bring about prosperity and boost confidence in peace.

But several Arab officials and businessmen have warned such a project would allow Israel to dominate Arab economies.

Gulf Arab states are playing a key role in the multilateral track of the Middle East peace process. Oman hosted talks on water resources last week and Qatar will be the venue for a working session on arms control next week.

In an interview with AFP in Oman, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin said a common market would benefit all parties but stressed the project needed long discussion.

"We believe that the realistic option for Arab states to brace for the Middle East market is to set up a free trade zone," the UAE study said. "Another point is that Israel has a governmental, institutional, legal and administrative structure that is far superior to that in all Arab countries," it added.

"This should prompt our governments to consolidate democracy in their political and economic systems and revise their policies on education, training, planning and exploitation of resources."

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, in an interview published Friday in the Qatari newspaper Al Sharq, criticised Arab states, saying they were "not up to the European standards of democracy."

Gholamreza Ansari was summoned to the Foreign Office in London on Thursday and given a stern warning that Iranian intelligence should halt its alleged contacts with the IRA.

He denied that Tehran had provided the IRA with arms or money. Several years ago, the Iranians named a street outside the British embassy after Bobby Sands, the IRA hunger striker who starved himself to death.

The latest row threatens to destroy efforts launched last year to quietly normalise relations despite the continued Iranian death threat hanging over British author Salman Rushdie for allegedly blaspheming Islam in "The Satanic Verses."

"It's difficult to guess the outcome of this crisis," said a British source in Tehran who requested anonymity. "But we are sure that our information is correct."

Iran and Britain broke diplomatic relations after the late

Pope is 'excellent' following surgery

ROME (Agencies) — Pope John Paul II underwent successful surgery on a fractured thighbone Friday after slipping and falling as he got out of his bathtub, doctors at the Gemelli clinic where the pontiff was being treated said.

The Pope, 73, underwent three hours of surgery in what doctors described as a "routine" operation which involved placing a metal pin to help heal the fracture. Clinic Director Emilio Tressalti had told journalists outside the hospital earlier that the Pope's general condition was "optimal" and there was no need for concern.

"Of course, any operation requires a minimum of precautions, but this type of intervention is routine for us," he said. Pope John Paul was taken to the clinic after slipping and fracturing his thighbone as he was getting out of his bathtub Thursday evening.

Vatican spokesman Joaquin Navarro insisted that the fall was purely accidental and not due to an ailment. He said the pontiff, who was to have begun a three-day visit to Sicily Friday, had not lost consciousness "either before or after his fall."

Sicilian church officials said the visit was postponed Friday until a later unspecified date. Dr. Emilio Tressalti said earlier surgeons were inserting an artificial replacement for the head and neck of the fractured femur, or thigh bone.

"The Pope's general condition is excellent. It is a complicated operation only because of its nature," Dr. Tressalti said.

The Polish-born pontiff, whose dizzying pace of travel around the world has become a trademark of his papacy, was expected to remain in hospital for three to four weeks for rest and physiotherapy, he added. The accident, the Pope's second fall in six months, inevitably raised concern for his health, although he managed to crack a joke as he was wheeled into hospital.

"You have to admire my loyalty," he told staff at the Gemelli, where he has been admitted six times.

COLUMN

Diana hints at return to public life

LONDON (R) — Princess Diana, estranged wife of the heir to Britain's throne, has hinted that she may be easing her self-imposed withdrawal from public life. She made a surprise appearance at a function for a charity to aid hospices which look after the terminally ill. Asked by Britain's Press Association news agency if she would be seeing more of her in months to come, the Princess of Wales replied, "you may be." Princess Diana announced last December she would be cutting down on her public activities and leading a more private life, devoting extra time to her sons, Prince William and Prince Henry. The princess, widely popular despite her separation from Prince Charles, had been increasingly irritated that her every step was dogged by the media, and on a couple of occasions had shouted at tabloid photographers lying in wait for her. But a Buckingham Palace spokesman sought to play down the importance of the appearance. "It would be wrong to read into her acceptance anything definite or specific about the direction of her work in the future," a palace spokesman said.

Swedish pop star attacked by German fan

STOCKHOLM (R) — Swedish pop star Jenny Berggren, a singer with rock band Ace of Base, was attacked at her home by a knife-wielding German female fan, the singer said. Berggren, whose group's songs The Sign and Happy Nation have been number one hits around the world this year, was unharmed in the attack, although her mother received stab wounds to her hand. Berggren told Swedish Television the woman fan had been camped outside her home in Gothenburg, western Sweden for two days. Early Wednesday morning the 21-year-old woman broke into the house where Berggren lives with her parents and forced the singer to her parents' room, where they overcame the German after a struggle.

Norwegian North Pole hero welcomed home

OSLO (R) — Norway's first-born Boerge Ousland, the first person to reach the North Pole alone and unaided, returned home Thursday to an enthusiastic crowd. "I never made the North Pole bigger than life itself — I never took any unnecessary risks," Mr. Ousland told reporters, clutching his six-year-old son Max at Oslo's Airport. "This was an honest trip and maybe one of the last classic challenges left. There are very few white spots on the map when you think in terms of sport achievements," said Mr. Ousland, who was airlifted off the North Pole after a 52-day icy slog. Mr. Ousland, who built up fat reserves by drinking a glass of olive oil every day for a year before setting off from Siberia, lost 20 kilos during the trip. His face was frost-bitten. "I have never felt so small in all my life as when I was dropped off by the helicopter and left alone in minus 37 Celsius and a strong wind from the south," Mr. Ousland said about his first day on the icecap.

Former clerk jailed for embezzling millions

PAU, France (R) — A French court has jailed for five years a former bank clerk who embezzled more than 800 million francs (\$135 million) from investors attracted by promises of 30 per cent tax-free returns. Jackie Milesi, convicted of embezzlement and illicit banking, was also fined 350,000 francs (\$60,000) and condemned to pay 200 million francs (\$34 million) in damages. Two accomplices were given sentences of two and a half and two years, both with half of the term suspended. Mr. Milesi, a 53-year-old charmer who was sentenced Thursday, was estimated to have tricked 2,900 people from pensioners to wealthy investors. The prosecution said that Mr. Milesi, sacked from a bank for embezzlement 21 years ago, used his clients' funds to pay interest to earlier investors in a classic fraud trick. During the trial he admitted the scheme but denied being a crook.

Summary of Israel-PLO economic agreement

PARIS (AFP) — This is a summary of the main points of the agreement signed by Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) covering economic relations once Palestinian autonomy begins in the Gaza Strip and Jericho, as provided by the Israeli delegation.

Import policy

Israel and the Palestinian authority will have an import policy basically similar in all respects regarding imports and customs. Nonetheless, the Palestinian authority will be able to import mutually agreed goods at customs rates differing from those prevailing in Israel, following jointly agreed import procedures. Moreover, it will be able to import goods from Arab countries, in agreed, limited quantities. Arrangements will be made for the two customs authorities to jointly operate the border crossing in Jericho and Gaza.

Monetary policy

The Palestinian authority will establish a monetary authority, whose main functions will be the regulating and supervision of the banks operating in the area, the determination within certain limits of the liquidity ratios on deposits, the management of foreign exchange reserves and the supervision of foreign exchange transactions.

The two sides will continue to discuss the possibility of issuing various alternatives of a Palestinian currency. To encourage trade, they will mutually allow the opening of bank branches. Until then, the NIS (Israeli shekel) will continue to constitute a legal means of payment in the autonomy's areas side by side with other currencies.

Direct taxation

The Palestinian tax administration will conduct its own direct tax policy, including income tax on individuals and corporations, property taxes and municipal rates and fees, according to the policy and the rates determined by the Palestinian authority. The two parties will collect

Income taxes on economic activities

income taxes on economic activities conducted in their respective areas. Israel will transfer to the Palestinian authority 75 per cent of the revenues from the income tax collected from Palestinians employed in Israel.

Indirect taxation

A VAT system similar to that operating in Israel will be operated also by the Palestinian authority. The VAT rates of the Palestinian authority will be between 15 per cent and 16 per cent.

Labour

Work in Israel is essential for the Palestinians expanding their employment opportunities; the guiding principle in this sphere is to enable mutual movement of labour. The rights of Palestinian workers employed in Israel will be preserved according to arrangements existing in Israel, a social security system being established in the meantime by the Palestinians.

Agriculture

Agriculture produce from the autonomy will enter Israel freely, except for five goods on which agreed import quotas have been imposed for five years — tomatoes, cucumbers, potatoes, eggs, and broilers.

Manufacturing

There will be free movement of goods manufactured in the area.

Tourism

A Palestinian tourist administration will be set up to manage subjects related to tourism in the areas of the Palestinian authority. Tourists will move freely between Israel and the autonomy. Tourist agencies, touring companies and tourist guides will be able to operate "on the other side" provided they satisfy the relevant professional criteria.

Fuel

The price of gasoline in the autonomy will be determined according to the autonomy's costs in purchasing it, and the taxes levied on gasoline in the autonomy. The agreement stipulates that the prices of gasoline will not fall short by more than 15 per cent of the maximum gasoline price in Israel.

Insurance

The agreement deals with two main topics.

A. The full transfer of the licensing and supervision authority over the insurance business in the areas of the Palestinian authority.

B. An agreement for the compulsory insurance of motor vehicles and the compensation of the victims of road accidents based on: — The Palestinian authority maintain in its area a system of compulsory insurance of motor vehicles in the form existing in Israel, but with limited compensation. — Policies issued on the Palestinian authority being valid also in Israel, and victims there being compensated according to the Israeli laws. And Israeli policies being valid in the areas of the Palestinian authority.